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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

Charity rejoiceth in the Truth.—*Paul to the Corinthians.*

Those creeds are best, which keep the very words of Scripture; and that faith is best, which hath greatest simplicity.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

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PROSPECTUS.

The principal object proposed in the present work, is to set forth the doctrines, and inculcate the truths of the christian religion, as they are usually understood by Unitarians. It is published monthly, in numbers, each number containing not less than thirty-six pages.

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No. IX.] SEPTEMBER, 1821. [Vol. II.

Causes of early Errors in Religion.

MANY causes have conspired at different periods to introduce into the christian religion doctrines and sentiments, which were never contemplated by our Saviour or his Apostles. Some of these are easily detected; others are more concealed. We know the great event of the Reformation was brought about by the gross and glaring errors, which had by degrees crept into the church. Protestantism in all its gradations and shapes has become such by lopping off the excrescences, which had been gradually accumulating around the fair and simple form of christian truth. The enormities of later times may no doubt be traced to the passions and selfish motives of ambitious men. The excesses, which opened the eyes, and roused the spirit of Luther, were of comparatively modern origin. One abuse had been heaped upon another, till the measure was at length full. Religion had become an engine of secular domination; and the gospel of Jesus, which was designed to enlighten men with truth, wean them from the world, and prepare them for heaven, was made to fix the seal of ignorance, minister to the wicked passions, and chain the soul to the grovelling things of the earth.

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But there was a time when these derelictions began. The fountain itself was pure; and the first principles of contamination must have been infused by some potent and active causes. The errors of christianity were early and deeply rooted. On no other supposition can we account for the wild and extraordinary fancies, as well as atrocities in practice, which have been sheltered under its sacred authority. It is gratifying to find, on examining facts, that this only supposition is corroborated. This discovery frees religion from any suspicion of a tendency to such results in itself, and strengthens our faith in its divine character and purifying power.

The first errors of Christianity may be pursued with considerable certainty to their sources. They are no doubt to be found in the conflicting opinions, which prevailed at that day among the people of various nations, who became the first converts. Systems of philosophy, which embraced religion and morals, had been matured and sublimated by the successive labours of great and learned men, till they had obtained a general assent and reverence. The mind came to the christian religion obscured by these systems. In adopting this faith, early associations were to be broken up, deeply fixed prejudices eradicated, favourite and cherished opinions abandoned, and the pride of knowledge subdued.

It requires but little knowledge of human nature for any one to be sensible, with what difficulty these sacrifices could be made, even with the best disposition and most serious efforts, and it is by no means surprising that the mind should hold fast many of its original impressions, and that these should be mingled with the new and imposing truths, which had been lately received. Men would naturally have a fondness for discover-

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ing analogies between their former and present opinions, and a willingness to retain as much as possible of the system, which had once operated so powerfully upon their imagination, and gained the assent of their understanding.

Long before the time of our Saviour, there had been two systems in vogue, dignified with the venerable name of Philosophy, and essentially different from each other, namely, the Oriental and the Grecian. In all those countries to which the christian religion found its way during the first century, one or other of these systems, or some of the peculiar tenets of both combined, had assumed an entire ascendency over the minds, not only of the learned, but of the people generally.

The birth place of the Oriental Philosophy was Persia, or Arabia; but at the commencement of the christian era, it had spread itself over Palestine and made its way even to Alexandria, which city, since the Ptolomies, had become the central point of learning and refinement in the East. This philosophy dealt profoundly in the doctrine of spirits; it traced out their genealogies, assigned to them various ranks, and apportioned the parts, which they respectively sustained in the work and management of the creation. It went farther, and invented rules by which these spirits might be called from their invisible abodes and busy occupations, to aid the designs of men. Hence the witchcraft of the Old Testament, the doctrine of demons, the genii of the Arabian Tales, and the common spiritual agents of eastern story.

Another peculiarity of this philosophy was the manner in which it accounted for good and evil in the world. It taught that there were two beings existing from eternity, and equally powerful, the one essentially

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good in its nature, and the other bad. This last was the author of all evil, and also of all imperfection. He alone gave existence to matter, which is always at war with the etherial part, clogging the soul, causing it to sin, and subjecting it to suffering. This notion had a most pernicious tendency. It destroyed every just principle of morals, by making virtue consist in practices either absurd, or such as had no efficacy in refining the feelings, improving the intellect, or exalting the character.

As the body was the seat of every thing wicked, of every pain, and every spiritual malady, the only mode of being freed from its evil influences, and the tyranny of the wicked being by whom it was controlled, was thought to be unceasing tortures, mortifications, and an obstinate resistance of every inclination, which led even to innocent pleasures and enjoyments. He only was the truly virtuous man, who shunned society, despised the comforts of life, looked with a morose contempt on the bustling pursuits of the world, and wrapt himself in the sombre mantle of his own gloomy contemplations. This was morality; this was the ambition of those, who coveted the fame of sanctity, and the homage of the less resolute and less self-denying multitude. It was this crude notion, which filled the caves and caverns with moping hermits; and it was a relic of the same, which, in later times, peopled the cells of monastic seclusion with useless ascetics. To the same phrensied dream may be attributed the hair shirt, the cord belt, the self inflicted scourges, and other ridiculous subterfuges, by which men have fancied they could atone for their crimes, appease an offended Deity, and soothe the achings of conscience. These abuses of religion, which sprung from the wild reveries of a benighted imagination,

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were many of them detected by the purifying test of the Reformation, and have since been done away. Others mingled in the same stream, and came down farther, and are not yet removed.

The Western, or Grecian, Philosophy had been brought to its highest perfection by Plato. This system was greatly superior to the Eastern. It had been the gradual work of some of the wisest men the world has ever seen. Its machinery and its theogony were imaginary and fantastic, but its morals were founded on the basis of reason and human nature. As a *theory* of morals it was in many respects beautiful; but it was destitute of some essential parts by which its symmetry was disfigured, and it was indeed a theory which could never be made practical, without higher sanctions than the wit of man could discover. It was too abstract and aerial; and although it was seldom the patron of vice, it was in many cases an ineffectual guide to virtue. After many subtle inquiries and fruitless speculations, it had at length been agreed, that virtue was the chief good; and this was a fundamental principle with Plato. To this end he would consider his philosophy directed. But the *virtue* of the heathen world was not the virtue of christianity. When the chief good was attained, it was but a single step towards the high acquisitions to which the rules of the Gospel are designed to conduct the mind. The nature of God is the foundation of all morals and of all religion. Of this nature Plato was ignorant. He knew nothing of the unity of God, of his perfections, his providence. He could not solve the problem of the existence of good and evil in such unequal distribution; and although he accounted virtue the chief good, he could not tell why evil was so often its inseparable companion. This was beyond the reach of

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human wisdom. It was a light hidden in darkness, which could be made manifest only by a revelation from the true God of a future state of just retribution. Plato's moral system was also encumbered by his theogony. He believed in a Supreme Cause, but he had no accurate conceptions of the attributes of this Cause. He peopled the universe with inferior deities, and dreamt about their agency and offices. There was little in their characters or example to attract the respect, or imitation, of the virtuous on earth.

In the primitive age of christianity, Plato's system, imperfect as it originally was, had become corrupted by the innovations of his followers. A new philosophy at length sprung up in Alexandria, which had Platonism for its foundation, but was deformed by an unnatural mixture of the Eastern scheme. This was called the New Platonic, or Eclectic philosophy. In this system, thus combined of the other two, almost all the early errors of christianity took their rise. It retained the moral part of the Eastern, and the theogony of the Westtern, each with certain modifications. Several circumstances concurred to give the errors of this Alexandrian school a currency, and to introduce them into christianity. The men, who embraced them, were among the most learned of the age. Some of them were early converted to the christian faith. But in this conversion they did not lose their attachment to their former studies and opinions. They eagerly caught at every point of resemblance between these and their newly adopted religion. The consequence was, that in a short time many pagan tenets were mixed with the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and under such circumstances as would be most likely to ensure their permanency. "Until the second century," says Less, an orthodox writer, "the Christians

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always persisted in the sound exposition of the New Testament. To this period they continued free, if we except the joyless morality of the Essenes, from the distractions of pseudo-philosophy; and maintained among themselves genuine apostolical christianity. But scarcely had some of the scholars of the heathen world, for instance Clement of Alexandria, acknowledged christianity, when the pseudo-philosophy of the Easterns and New Platonists broke in like a rapid torrent, and left behind universal desolation. Until this time the doctrines of the christian religion had been preached without exception, and with the greatest publicity to all who would hear them, and, as the founder of christianity expressed himself in his charge to the Apostles, 'from the house tops.' But now, in resemblance of the heathen mysteries, certain ceremonies and doctrines began to be concealed, and thus christianity assumed its mysteries, as well as heathenism. Besides, a variety of heathen ceremonies were adopted in the divine service, and hence christianity became gradually a ceremonial religion." These perversions of the true faith increased for centuries.

The allegorical mode of interpretation, which commenced with the incomparable Origen, opened a door for additional deviations. It virtually took away all rules, and left the religion of the Bible to float at random on the imagination. But we have not time to pursue this branch of the subject. What we have said is enough to show, that nothing could be more natural, than for the early converts to incorporate with the christian faith many of their former heathen notions, and thus to corrupt its purity. The subject has been thoroughly investigated by able hands, and what has been shown to be so extremely probable in itself, has

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been proved to be true in point of fact. The progress of many errors was stopped at the Reformation. Others still exist, and these of no little importance, which have been traced with great precision to the causes at which we have hinted. Our only inference is, that christians should study with care the grounds of their faith, and rejecting all systems of human invention in which these errors are found, should seek for truth in the Bible alone. Here, and here only, we have the religion of Jesus and his Apostles, unimpaired by the ravages of time, and unperverted by the vain imaginations and wayward designs of men.

On a Translation of the Scriptures.

Unitarian christians are sometimes accused of altering the language of the scriptures, and of supporting their doctrines by forcing a new translation upon those passages, which are alleged against them. To this charge we by no means plead guilty. Our doctrines are upon the face of scripture. The general tenour of the New Testament is one of our main arguments against trinitarians. No one, we believe, could rise from the perusal of the New Testament alone, with the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the Almighty. Trinitarians adduce a few detached texts—some of them would indeed be materially different in a more correct translation—but others would still retain all the force, which they can be allowed now to possess.

We are very free to say, that our views of the nature of the sacred writings, and of the use we are to make of them, differ from those of our orthodox breth-

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ren. We believe as sincerely as they can, that the Bible contains the rule of our faith and practice. But we do not believe that king James's version of the Bible is of divine authority. We are sure, although this version has many excellencies, and does undoubtedly give, on the whole, a fair representation of the original, that it contains many inaccuracies and faults. This has been the opinion of distinguished men of every denomination of christians. It has been proclaimed by the most learned English theologians, both in and out of the establishment. Archbishop Newcome, in a work entitled, *An historical view of English biblical Translations*, has brought together the opinions of a very large number of men eminent for learning and piety. They agree, that a much more correct representation of the original scriptures might, and ought, to be given to the public.

There are facts relative to the version in common use, which ought to satisfy every mind, that with the best intentions, the translators could not have given so correct a version of the sacred writings, as might be given at the present day. In regard to the New Testament particularly, we have now a much more correct text obtained from a most elaborate and faithful collation of a great number of manuscripts not then known, and of much higher authority than those which were compared to form the edition used by James's translators. Beza's edition was the one selected as the standard of our common English version, and that was founded upon the authority of a few manuscripts, of which only two were of great value, and of these he appears to have made but little use. Since that time, more than three hundred manuscripts have been discovered. These have been minutely examined, and from them,

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together with the ancient versions and writings of the Fathers, a text has been formed by Griesbach, which is by all, who are capable of estimating its value, acknowledged to be the most accurate which has ever been made. This would be a sufficient reason of itself for making a new translation. But there are many other reasons. Since king James's time, the labours of the ablest scholars in Europe have been employed in the various departments of theology. Great light has been thrown upon the sacred writings. The original languages of the Bible are now far better understood, and the researches, which have been industriously made into antiquity, have tended to elucidate the sacred volume. Moreover, vast improvements have been introduced into the philosophy of the human mind; the nature of language has been thoroughly investigated, and important principles of interpretation thence deduced.

But the prejudices of men have enlisted in the defence of our common version. They feel a veneration for it, and are attached to it from habit and association. It is the book which they have heard spoken of with reverence from childhood, and appealed to in support of the most solemn truths; the book, which their fathers for many generations have read, and every part of it is held sacred. Such prejudices we would always treat with the greatest tenderness and delicacy. But they should not be suffered to gain the ascendency of reason and common sense. The same veneration is not due to the words of James's Bible, as to the truths of revelation, and the two should not be confounded.

Is there not reason to fear, that apprehensions for their favourite systems, have caused some good christians to be alarmed by any proposals for a new version? Has it not thus become a party question? And while the zeal

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for party is so much greater than the zeal for truth, the merits of the present version will not be fairly canvassed, nor can we ever hope easily to substitute a new and a better one in its place. To a certain extent, it may be desirable, perhaps, that these prejudices and fears should exist. If they retard the progress of truth, they may also prevent the intrusion of error. As a general principle, this may be admitted; but it should yield in extreme cases, like the one in question. Truth cannot suffer, but much error may be removed. Party feelings should be forgotten, sectarian prejudices suppressed, and every good feeling, principle, and honest intention, should be blended by all parties in a work, which aims only to exhibit the word of God in its proper force and purity.

S. J. M.

Rev. Mr. Campbell's Address on the Trinity and Atonement.

A SMALL work has lately been published in Pittsburgh, by the Rev. John Campbell, of that place, entitled, An Address to professed Christians on the Unity of God, and the Reconciliation made by Jesus Christ. The author manifests an intimate acquaintance with the subjects, which he undertakes to discuss, and sustains his positions by arguments drawn chiefly from the scriptures.

He first examines the doctrine of the trinity, as it is usually received by its advocates, and proves it to be unsupported by the plain sense of the word of God, and opposed to the scripture views of the divine unity. He starts with the following propositions; "1. That the

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christian religion is wholly the subject of divine revelation, and to be learned from the scriptures alone. 2. That it is clearly and fully expressed in scripture, and ought to be presented, 'Not in the words, which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.' 3. That the religion, which comes from God, cannot contain contradictions, but is necessarily one whole." Taking these propositions as established, he proceeds to his work.

After having shown how the scriptures speak of the divine unity, and asserted, that the language commonly used by trinitarians to express their doctrine, has no resemblance to any language of the Bible, he asks,

"Shall we be told, that although the expressions themselves are not to be found, yet there are passages from which it [the doctrine] may be inferred? I would ask, does any man think, that if God meant to teach this doctrine, he would not clearly have expressed it, as well as he has done his unity, but have left it to be inferred by partial men, who draw their inferences according to their preconceived opinions? When men are under the necessity of using unscriptural terms to express their ideas, is there not reason to think, that the ideas themselves are as foreign to scripture, as the terms employed are? And is not every such subject condemned by our second proposition?

"Examine the doctrine by this rule. The term *trinity* is not to be found in the scriptures, nor any term like it. The divine unity, which, as we have seen, is clearly taught in scripture, is directly opposed to the trinity. If the unity is taught, and the trinity not taught; if it also contradicts the unity, ought we not to reject it as condemned by all our three propositions?

"Is it said, that the trinity is not opposed to the unity of God, as it respects his essence, but his personality, I ask, what are we to understand by a unity of essence, and division of personality?" p. 6.

The fact here urged is well worthy of observation. Are we to believe, that a fundamental doctrine of scripture can be one, which cannot be defined in the language of scripture? Instead of using the simple lan-

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guage of revelation, trinitarians have invented a very awkward, and in some cases, a perfectly unintelligible phraseology to express their ideas on this great tenet of their faith; such as, God of God; very God of very God; triune God; light of light; God-man; three persons in one God; two natures in one being; God the Son; God the Holy Ghost; trinity of persons, and unity of essence; trinity in unity, and unity in trinity; hypostatical union; eternal procession; and numerous others quite as extraordinary and unmeaning. Now of the phrases here quoted, not one can be found in the Bible, nor any thing resembling them. Does this argue much for the doctrine, which they are intended to shadow forth? It would seem as if the ingenuity of man had gone to its last extremity, in contriving such combinations of words, as should the most effectually cloud the understanding. They are more like the talismans of magic, than the plain symbols of religious truth. Trinitarians would no doubt think the charge very unjust, should we say they do not go to the Bible for their faith. We make no such charge. But tell us what evidence we can have in their vindication, when we find them so totally abandoning the language of the scriptures, and constructing their creeds in a phraseology as uncouth and contradictory, as it is unscriptural. These remarks need not be confined to the trinity. They will apply with nearly equal force to many other doctrines, which have been made the burden of human creeds.

On the subject of the supposed two natures of Christ, Mr. Campbell says,

"Let the advocates of two natures produce any one passage where this sentiment is *expressed*, and then they may urge it upon us; but until they do this, we assert that it is no part of the christian reli-

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gion. I would urge further, that the language of Jesus, in which it is said his human nature only is meant, is so expressed as necessarily to exclude his possessing any proper deity of his own. I shall here instance two passages as specimens. 'I can of *mine own self* do nothing.' Whatever natures he might have possessed surely must be included in the expression *mine own self;* and when he asserts, *that he could do nothing*, how dare any one contradict him, and assert quite the contrary? In 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28, we are told, that when the end cometh, then he shall deliver up the kingdom of God, *even the Father*—that the Father hath put all under his feet;—but this expression manifestly excludes the subjection of the Father, who did put all things under him; 'and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.' This is a passage that speaks for itself, and we earnestly entreat our opponents to consider it attentively, and see if they can reconcile it with the possession of an underived Deity by our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Will it be said, that although the expression of two natures is not to be found, yet words to the same effect abound in scripture? I ask, where are these words to the same effect? I ask further, can any man pretend that he can employ terms better fitted to express the idea intended, than God himself?" p. 10.

In this doctrine of two natures, then, we find the same objections, in regard to the language used in describing or defining it, as in the trinity. It has no direct testimony in scripture. It is contradicted in numerous passages; it is contradictory in itself. What can be a plainer contradiction, than to say two beings are one being? If Christ be God and man united, then he consists of two beings, as distinctly as two men. This is equally absurd and impossible. Being implies mind, and all the attributes of mind. Two beings imply two minds; and what man in a state of sanity will talk of the *possibility* of two minds being at the same time two minds and one mind? It is just as rational to say, that the consciousness of one man is the consciousness of another, or that the will of one is the will of another. The consciousness and nature of Christ were not the

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same as the consciousness and nature of God, nor was there *necessarily* any accordance between them. Christ had not always the same will as God; for where he says, "thy will, and not mine be done," it is evident that his will at that time did not accord with the Father's. He was also subject to passions, desires, and feelings, to which there can be nothing corresponding in the nature of God. How then could these beings be the same, with such opposite tendencies in their natures?

It is idle to tell us here, that we are talking of things of which we know nothing, and therefore it is presumptuous for us to reason about them. We say the perfect union of God with another being is impossible, precisely as we say it is impossible for God to be unjust, unhappy, or unwise. Although we cannot comprehend the Deity, nor any part of his works, yet we do not hesitate to say, that certain things are impossible in regard to him. We venture to say this from what we know of his attributes. But we certainly have no stronger evidence of any of his attributes, than of his simple unity; and we may affirm with just as much confidence, that the essence of his being can never be so divided as in any sense to make three parts, or be so united with another as in any sense to make one being, as we can that it is impossible for his justice ever to be altered, or his power to be circumscribed. It is not dealing fairly with the subject, therefore, to call it a mystery, and to take it out of the province of reason.

But say the advocates of this doctrine, it is revealed, and must be believed, although it cannot be explained. This principle we adhere to most firmly. What is revealed we consider an implicit object of faith. That man is only a partial christian, who does not cheerfully and cordially receive a truth, which he is convinced has

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been revealed. But let not credulity be taken for conviction. To pass over a revealed truth, without being able to discover it, is an unhappy mistake; but we doubt whether it is more unfortunate, than to find revelations where none were intended. The former terminates in ignorance, the latter in error. For our own part, we have found nothing in the word of God, which gives any testimony in favour of the doctrine in question. It is nowhere mentioned in any form whatever. It is inferred, and obscurely inferred too, from disconnected and broken passages. But is this enough to prove a doctrine, which contradicts the highest principles of the understanding, which is at variance with the attributes of the Deity, and involves an impossibility? We think not.

Again, the language of Christ himself always implies, that he and the Father are distinct beings. When he prayed to God, was it himself to whom he prayed? It certainly was, if he and the Father were the same being. "All things," he says, "are delivered unto me of my Father—All power is *given* unto me in heaven and in earth." Matth. xi. 27. xxviii, 18. Do these passages teach, that he was himself the same being as the Father, who had delivered to him all things? The Apostle says, Acts, ii. 36, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God *hath made* that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Can any language more forcibly express two beings? Was God crucified? And what meaning would there be in these words, if Jesus himself were the being by whom he was made Lord and Christ.

The second part of Mr. Campbell's treatise is devoted to the subject of the atonement, or the doctrine, which teaches, that the sufferings and death of Christ were

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taken as a substitute for the sins of men. He states what he conceives to be the scripture view of the subject in the following words.

"Let it be observed, that the Greek word translated *atonement* is the same, that is almost always rendered *reconciliation*. It is never translated *atonement* in the New Testament, except in Rom. v. 11. and there it is in the margin rendered *reconciliation*; and in this text we are said to *receive* it. 'We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now *received* the atonement.'

"It supposes a variance to subsist between two parties, but made one again by reconciliation. The scripture gives us a distinct account of the parties at variance,—the nature, means, and end of the reconciliation. That the parties are God on the one side, and man on the other seems admitted by all. That the cause of the difference is *sin* on the part of man, which alienated him from God, is as generally admitted as the former.

"Many also are willing to admit, that, as God is unchangeable in goodness, no change can have taken place in him, and as the change is wholly in man, the reconciliation must consist in delivering him from sin with all its consequences." p. 18.

The view here taken embraces an important fact, and one little regarded by those, who defend the doctrine of satisfaction. Men are to be reconciled to God, and not God to men. God can never have been estranged from his creatures. As he has regarded them once, he must always regard them. His nature is incapable of change or disaffection, and consequently he can never be otherwise than reconciled. The scriptures accordingly always speak of the reconciliation being on the part of men; as in the text above quoted, where it is said, "we have *received* the reconciliation." And the command is, "Be ye reconciled to God." By their sins men have wandered from their Maker. They have broken his laws, and become disaffected to his government. His love and goodness would bring them back, cause them to see their errors and follies, and *reconcile them* to his wise and equable dispensations.

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This is the reconciliation, which he sent his Son to attain. We are told he sent him to appease divine wrath, and satisfy divine justice. But neither of these things are possible. God is not, cannot be, a wrathful Being; and instead of justice, it would be the most flagrant injustice to demand the sufferings of the innocent for the crimes of the guilty. Christ came to turn men from their iniquities, and to save them from the fatal consequences of their sins. He came to produce a change in *them*, and not in God. He came to open the way of eternal life, and to reveal doctrines, which should induce men to pursue it. The whole scheme of his religion points to this end. Repentance and holiness are the perpetual theme of every command, and every exhortation. But the notion, that he came to make a full satisfaction for the sins of the world, destroys all the moral and positive parts of his religion. There is no occasion for repentance, holiness, or any other moral quality, if the only object to which they can lead has already been attained. Some have said, that this satisfaction was intended only to repair the breach of the law, which was made by the lapse of our first parents, and that after all every individual is answerable for his own sins. But this device has much the appearance of having been contrived only as an escape from the immoral and dangerous consequences of the scheme, when admitted in its fullest latitude. But it is unsound and inconsistent. The satisfaction was made by an infinite Being. It must, therefore, have an infinite extent; and if it have power to remove one sin, it must have the same power to remove all that ever have been, or ever can be committed. To say, that although an infinite satisfaction is made, God might accept it only in part, would

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be to impeach his justice. If full payment be made, justice requires a perfect release.

The doctrine of satisfaction, or substitution, is also at variance with the freedom of divine grace.

"If sin is a debt, and Christ paid it all, upon what ground is it said to be *forgiven?* Let any of the advocates of this system show, how the full payment of a debt can be reconciled with the glorious truth, that *God forgives us freely.*—If, as is asserted, Jesus was delivered up, that he might pay the debt, and pacify God's wrath, what was there that God could *freely* give, when Christ had paid for all?—But if, according to scripture, the love of God was such, that he gave his Son to publish the Gospel, to exemplify it in his life, to confirm it by his death, and to assure us of eternal life by his resurrection from the dead, all is clear, all is consistent."—p. 24.

All that is said of grace or pardon in the scriptures, if men are accepted of God on the grounds of a satisfaction made for their sins by another being, would be unintelligible. Where is any room for pardon? Our acceptance is secured, and there is nothing to pardon. But we do not learn the scriptures thus. As we read them, our only hope of acceptance is in the free grace, and unmerited pardon of God. Is it said we are pardoned through the merits of Christ? This is only giving wrong names to things, and removing the difficulty one step higher. If a pardon is already purchased, it is granted not as an act of grace or mercy, but of justice.

And yet every sinner must feel, that there is a necessity for the pardoning mercies of God. When the wicked repent, and turn from their sins, and reform their lives, and not before, God in his gracious goodness will forgive and accept them. When we have done all, which our imperfect natures will suffer us to do, we shall still be deficient, and unworthy in the sight of a holy God. But he has promised his loving kindness, his mercy, and his pardoning grace, to remove

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the dross which remains. The Son of God has made known the conditions, upon which we may expect the mercy and forgiveness of God will be exercised towards us. He has taught us the part we have to act. He has given us rules, and supplied us with motives. He has revealed the will and the laws of his Father in heaven. If we are in earnest, and persevere to the end in faith, obedience, and righteousness, we shall not lose the reward of our well doing. If we neglect these things, our hopes will prove shadowy and illusive.

We trust Mr. Campbell's book is calculated to do good where it shall circulate. His views appear to us scriptural, and his language is temperate and plain. There is more looseness of style, than we can approve, and the errors of the press are numerous. We presume the author's duties and avocations might justly be urged as some apology. Mr. Campbell preaches, we understand, to a congregation of unitarians in Pittsburgh, in addition to the arduous labours of a school.

Fifth Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller. On the Moral Tendency of Unitarian Preaching.

Sir,

My last letter was chiefly devoted to a consideration of the doctrines of Depravity and Regeneration, and their comparative moral tendency, as they are understood by unitarians and calvinists. I come now to the other particulars, by which you characterize unitarian preaching.

You say it teaches, that *the various exercises of mind, supposed by some to be essential to piety, are mere*

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dreams of enthusiasm. This is so vague a charge, that it hardly admits of a formal reply. You have made no attempt either to explain your meaning, or prove the fact. What you would have your readers understand by "the various exercises of mind," which you mention, they are left to conjecture. To meet such a statement, it were irrelevant and useless to produce argument.

Unitarians believe piety to be a rational and operative principle, founded on a knowledge of God, of his will, and of his requirements. The piety, which they preach and strive to cultivate, is various in its character and objects. It is a devout and impressive sense of the majesty, goodness, mercy, and holiness of God. It fills the mind with serious meditations on the divine perfections, and the divine laws, and not only rules in the understanding, but penetrates the heart and kindles the affections. The pious mind will feel grateful for the blessings it receives, and find its liveliest joy in pouring out thanksgivings and praises to the author of all good. Especially will it glorify his name for the way of salvation, which he has granted through his Son Jesus Christ. It will always have an impressive conviction of the unceasing presence of God, and be humbled with a sense of its own dependence and weakness. Unitarians think it also an essential part of piety, that they should strive to imitate the example of the Saviour in all things. While they love God, they desire to love his rational creatures, to treat them as brethren, respect their sincere professions, refrain from judging them harshly, or denying them the rights and hopes of christians. They believe charity a very important branch of piety. The man, who is ready to listen to the whispers of malevolence, raise the voice of detraction, or hurl the weapons of denunciation, gives no convincing testimo-

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ny in their view, that the pride of his own heart is subdued, or that he has the temper of the Gospel. In few words, unitarians preach a piety, which is intended to engage the heart, soul, and strength in a sincere love and service of God, which shall restrain all the unhallowed desires and wayward inclinations, which shall make men acquainted with the deceitfulness and vanity of their own hearts, and clothe them with a deep humility, sorrow for their sins, and unfeigned repentance —which shall open the channels of benevolence, and kind feelings towards their fellow men, direct their steps in the ways of Christ, raise their minds and conversation to heaven, and prepare them for the future good pleasure and holy service of God.

It is an evil report to say, that unitarians are averse to any "exercises of the mind," which embrace these objects. Whatever ministers to true holiness in others, they joyfully commend, and would desire to imitate; and I deny that they are ever accustomed to attribute any thing to enthusiasm, which is obviously connected with a pure intention and a holy life. When we see persons fond of trumpeting to the world the extraordinary merits of their own piety, eager to scatter in the ears of the multitude the raptures of their indescribable exercises, loud in proclaiming themselves the peculiar favourites of heaven, clamorous in revealing the ecstacies with which their hearts are daily and hourly visited, and busy in drawing lines of distinction between themselves and others, whom, in the excess of their christian charity, they assign to lower ranks in religious faith, attainments, and purity, however sincere and ardent they may be in their endeavours,—whenever we see such persons, experience has taught us, that we ought to be prepared for more of spiritual pride and self com-

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placency, than of unfeigned piety, true holiness, or the heavenly spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus. We are unwilling to allow, that we have been heedless observers, and we frankly confess, that we have seen no persons more barren in the genuine fruits of religion, than those who make the loudest professions, talk the most of secret and invisible communications, and weary the world with endless details and incidents with which no one has any concern but their own souls and their God. We have never discovered, that the dispositions of such persons have borne any uncommon marks of conformity to the will of God, that they were ready to make any extraordinary sacrifices in the divine service, or were more abstracted than others of humbler pretensions from the absorbing interests of the world. Show us the holy man of God, whose life is the transcript of his mind, and you will point to one, who communes with himself, who is an humble, silent worshipper, content to let the warmth of his zeal be felt through the medium of his good affections, and his religious impressions be seen in the tenor and unvarying rectitude of his life.

You next charge unitarians with preaching, *that the strictness and seclusion from fashionable amusements, such as the theatre, the ballroom, and the cardtable, which some inculcate, are uncommanded austerities, and being "righteous overmuch."* This charge, though more definite, is as groundless as the one just considered. I acknowledge that our preachers do not often so far forget themselves, or the sacred places in which they stand, as to preach about theatres, cardtables, and ballrooms. It is hoped and presumed, that few of them are so insensible of the solemnity of the occasion, and of the nature of their religion, as to profane the holy sabbath of God in his sanctuary by going into the haunts

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of dissipation, idleness, and vice to find topics, and select images, for the religious instruction and edification of a christian audience. These are not the things with which they wish to make their hearers familiar. No. They think it important to impress the words of Christ and his apostles, the doctrines and rules of the Gospel, the duties and expectations of christians. They preach against vice, and the dominion of sin, and not against theatres, ballrooms, or cardtables. They proclaim the laws of God as they are revealed in his word, the necessity of obedience to these laws, and the judgments that await the impenitent. Vice is a taint of the mind, from which it is not to be freed by referring to particular acts. Enlighten the conscience, make plain the duties and impress the obligations of religion, and you will gain a hold on the mind, which will serve as an anchor of safety in all times of doubt and peril. By this process you will make men see and confess their sins, and hasten to escape from their debasing thraldom. They will avoid wickedness, because they perceive its evil nature and tendency. There is no reason why we should attempt to particularize at the present day, more than our Saviour and his apostles of old. I know not that our preachers can follow a better model; and the specimens, which you have selected and charged them with overlooking, are the last from which it could be hoped any aids would be gained to devotion, seriousness, or virtue.

Your charge goes farther, and accuses unitarians not merely of neglecting to preach on these things, but of holding them up as "uncommanded austerities, and being righteous overmuch." Nothing can be more unfair, I will say, indeed, unfounded, than this insinuation. If it were an innocent mistake, it might be passed over,

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like many others, which I have not had time to notice. But it is hardly of this character, for it gives the impression, that unitarians preach immorality; that they not only avoid what is good, but inculcate what is bad. The wicked practices, from which other christians are warned by their leaders to abstain, are said to be represented by unitarian preachers as austerities to which their hearers need not submit, and as requiring an unnecessary degree of righteousness. Of this statement I can only say, it is one for which you cannot bring a shadow of proof, and is as opposite to the reality, as darkness to light. Unitarian preaching is distinguished for nothing more, than its rigid, practical tendency. It requires men to be christians in the entire spirit of the Gospel, and to seek the favour of God by an unremitted obedience to his laws.

Your next charge is, that, according to this preaching, *all men, whatever may be their character, will finally be saved, or annihilated.* This is a subject of importance, and claims to be examined with attention. We have first to ascertain whether your position is correct in point of fact, and here I apprehend you will be found to have spoken quite as loosely as in any thing we have yet had under review. It must be kept in mind, that you are professedly talking of doctrines "inculcated by unitarian preachers *all over the world.*" This you have repeated, seemingly to prevent any mistake in regard to the limits to which you would have your remarks applied.

It would be a laborious, and perhaps a fruitless task, to carry back our inquiries to the primitive unitarians. We must be contented to commence with the churches in Transylvania and Poland, where unitarianism was revived in modern times, and flourished under various

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fortunes for many years. The Racovian Catechism, although it was never adopted as a system of faith, is well known to express in very full terms the doctrines of those churches, and was drawn up by Socinus, aided by others among the most learned theologians of the fraternity. This Catechism teaches, by implication at least, the eternity of future punishment; and B. Wissowatius, in a note on the passage in which this sentiment is conveyed, asserts it "always to have been the opinion of this church, that the wicked will be doomed to punishment, and cast into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels." And again, after referring to the principal authors among the Fratres Poloni, and other eminent writers of the unitarian faith, he says, it is evident they "constantly maintained, that there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, and that the latter shall be consigned to everlasting punishment, but the former admitted to everlasting life." Such was the opinion of the numerous unitarians, who spread over Europe in the sixteenth century.*

You will meet with the same sentiment in the Swiss and French churches, which have more recently come over to this faith. In the Catechism of these churches, which is called the Geneva Catechism, it is said of the wicked, that "they will be tormented with remorse and abandoned to despair, because they have *lost eternal*

* Wissowatius refers to Simplicius and Volkelius—to Crellius's Commentary on Matth. iii. 10; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9; Heb. x. 27—to Slichtingius on John v. 29—to Walzogenius on Matth. iii. 12; x. 28; xxv. 41, 46; John v. 29—and to A. Wissowatius on Acts xxiv. 15. See Racovian Catechism, translated by Dr. T. Rees, p. 367. Note.

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happiness by their own misconduct."* The belief of the unitarian churches in Holland on this subject, I have no means of ascertaining, but there is reason to suppose it is similar to that of the churches last mentioned.

In England opinions respecting this point are various among unitarians, as they are with most other denominations. It is certain, however, that they universally believe in the future punishment of the wicked; but not many, probably, believe in the *eternity* of this punishment, at least in the sense of Calvinists. They do not pretend to define its precise duration, but hold that it will be in such degree and extent, as God in his justice and mercy shall see fit to inflict on the wicked.

The following extract is from the Christian Disciple, a work conducted by a number of clergymen in Boston and its vicinity, and may be supposed to convey the prevailing sentiment of the unitarians in this country. "We cannot but wonder and lament, that any should so far pervert the oracles of God, as to persuade men to believe, that there is no punishment hereafter, an error, we repeat, most dangerous to the interests of society; it breaks down the barriers of conscience, and removes those salutary restraints, without which neither virtue nor reputation, nor property, are secure."†

The true state of the case is, then, that unitarians *as a body universally* believe in the future punishment of the wicked. By a very large number this punishment has been considered eternal. By others it is supposed to be limited in duration, but to be severe and dreadful, according to the representations of the scrip-

* Geneva Catechism, p. 105. The texts quoted are Mark ix. 43; Matth. xxiii. 13.

† Christian Disciple, No. 70, for March and April, 1819.

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tures, and in proportion to the sins of each individual. After these facts, what shall we think of your bold and unqualified assertion above noticed?

But even admitting it to be the faith of any number or a majority of unitarians, that all men will finally be saved, why should they be selected as singular in this belief, and exposed to censure as if they maintained a doctrine, which has not been advocated by many pious men in all ages of the church? It is no more essential to unitarianism, than it is to trinitarianism, and I am fully convinced, that by far the greater number of those who have embraced it have been trinitarians. In its essential character, it is just as closely allied to one faith as the other. Origen of old is well known to have preached this doctrine, and Augustine tells of certain divines, who held it in his time. It was common in Germany before the Reformation, especially among the Baptists; and since that period, it has been received by numerous persons in every sect of Christians. It was countenanced by Archbishop Tillotson, of whom Whiston remarks, that "he chose rather to give up the veracity of God in these his threatenings, than to defend this eternity" of punishment. Both Dr. Bennett and Bishop Burnet, in their respective treatises on the Articles of the Church of England, express a belief, that eternal death made no part of the sentence against Adam. The doctrine in question was maintained by Bishop Newton, Dr. Rust, Bishop of Dromore, Dr. T. Burnet, Dr. Cheyne, Mr. White, William Law, the pious and intellectual Hartley, and the equally pious Lavater, by Dr. Chauncy, Chevalier Ramsay, and numerous others, who have written with great ability and learning in explanation and defence of their views, and who, it is believed, were all trinitarians. And if you will examine the sub-

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ject, you will unquestionably find the number of treatises written by trinitarians in support of this doctrine, to be to those written by unitarians, in a ratio of at least ten to one. And what is still more remarkable, the sect itself, which has taken its distinctive name from this tenet of its faith, has, till very lately, been composed entirely of trinitarians. And even now, the number of those of this sect, who have become unitarians, is undoubtedly small.

Considering these things, it will not readily be seen upon what principles of justice this doctrine is thus made to settle on unitarians, and adduced as an evidence of the immoral tendency of their preaching. The excellent men, whose names are mentioned above, have been eminent examples of christian piety and character, nor have we ever heard, that others among trinitarians holding the same faith have, on this account, been noted for defects of morals. Why then drag unitarians forward, and exhibit them as worthy of reprobation for entertaining a sentiment in common with many other christians of various denominations, whose reputation for morals and piety has never been impeached on account of this tenet?

The doctrine of universal salvation is in very close accordance with high calvinistic principles. If you take away the notion of election and reprobation, it becomes a necessary part of the system which remains. If Christ has made an atonement for the sins of the whole world, or in other words, if his sufferings were taken as a substitute for the sins of men, his righteousness being imputed to them and their sins to him, it follows, that all men will attain salvation through him. The benefits of his substitution cannot be restricted, because, according to the calvinistic plan, he was, in

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your own language, an "Almighty Surety." Calvinism, in the first place, makes all men so deplorably wicked, from the very constitution of their nature, as justly to consign them in a mass to everlasting perdition; and then, to rescue them from this state, it resorts to the sufferings and death of an Almighty Being, as the only means of removing so great an evil. So far it is consistent enough; and one would suppose a balance is fairly made. However deep and radical the depravity, no particle of it could remain untouched by the efficacy of an *Almighty Surety.* But now comes the strange inconsistency of the scheme. Its framers were not prepared to think so favourably of the goodness and pardoning mercy of God, as the last part of the above plan would indicate. Hence they contrived, with perfect inconsistency, to incorporate the notion of election and reprobation. Had the surety been less than *Almighty* this notion would not have involved so complete a contradiction. But to allow this would be to destroy the equality of the three persons in the trinity, as well as to provide an inefficient remedy for an infinite depravity. Amidst so many contending difficulties, it was perhaps wisely decided to choose the least.

Many calvinists, seeing this absurdity, have employed themselves in improving their system by divesting it of this incoherent part, and have consequently discovered, that they were no longer calvinists, but universalists. This was the case with Relly, the friend and companion of Whitefield; and also with Dr. Huntington, who even gave the title of *Calvinism Improved* to his work, setting forth the doctrine of universal salvation. And if the growing propensity, which now shows itself among calvinists, either to say as little as possible of their once favourite doctrine of election, or to deny

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it altogether, should continue, and at the same time the other rigid tenets of calvinism should be retained, we may expect at no distant period to see the ranks of universalism greatly strengthened from this quarter.

So much for facts. It may be in unison with the general object of my remarks, to say a few words on the comparative moral tendency of the two doctrines just noticed. For argument's sake let it be admitted, that they are both true. Although this would be an impossibility, yet the *influence* of a doctrine when thoroughly believed does not depend on its truth or falsehood; and we may reason on this influence without reference to either. I will confine my remarks to two particulars, as embracing most, if not all others, namely, the love of God, and the sanction of the divine laws.*

* With the truth or falsehood of either of the doctrines I have at present no concern. The controversy on this subject is well known to rest on the meaning of a single Greek word, αἰων, and its derivative, αἰωνιος. The advocates for one doctrine affirm, that the word signifies an eternal duration when applied to the punishment of the wicked; while those on the other side maintain, that it should always be taken in a limited sense when thus applied. Hence the whole controversy becomes a matter of verbal criticism, and it is one presumption against the doctrine of eternal misery—a doctrine of so much moment if true—that it should be left to so slender a defence; and more especially, as the word is used in only *five* places in the New Testament in connexion with the punishment of sin, where it is *supposed* to mean eternal duration.

Innumerable examples might be cited, in which the word is used to denote a limited duration; and particularly, in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, other words are joined with it, which effectually restrict its meaning. Thus, Exod. xv. 18. *The Lord shall reign,* τον αἰωνα, και επ'αἰωνα, και ετι, *for ever and ever, and farther.* Dan. xii. 3. *They shall shine as the stars,* εις τον αἰωνα, και ετι, *for ever, and farther.* Mic. iv. 5. *We will walk in the name of the Lord our God,* εις τον αἰωνα, και

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What is the foundation of that love of God, which is the first and greatest duty of christians? Does it not exist in those excellencies of his character, which shine forth in his benevolence, his mercy, his paternal kindness, and unbounded love for us? But how can you reconcile these attributes with the idea of his having doomed a certain number of his creatures to an endless misery, a state and degree of suffering, which bear no proportion to any amount of crimes, that a finite and frail being is capable of committing? Does not this doctrine, viewed thus abstractly, take from the Deity every thing that is amiable, and lovely, and affectionate? Can you look up to such a being with that filial reverence, and holy gratitude, with that perfect trust, and hope, and confidence, which the scriptures demand towards God, as the kind Father, protector, and righteous judge of men? Admitting the doctrine to be true, which teaches, that all the wicked will be punished hereafter by an awful and indescribable visitation of God's displeasure, but at the same time in proportion to the deserts of every individual, till at length they shall all be purified and fitted for the employments and happiness of heaven, and be made to act an important part through all future ages in celebrating the

εἰς αἰῶνα, for ever, and beyond it. See Chauncy's Salvation of all Men, p. 263. These examples are enough to prove, that the word *may* be used in a limited sense. The only question to be settled is, whether it is thus used in reference to the punishment of the wicked. This, Dr. Chauncy and others have attempted to prove. It is argued on the contrary, that the same reasons why it should thus be limited when applied to the sufferings of the wicked, will give it a limited sense when it denotes the happiness of the righteous. There are many circumstances, which weaken this argument, but it may be doubted, perhaps, whether it has ever been completely invalidated.

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praises and advancing the glory of God,—I say, admitting this doctrine to be true, does it not exhibit the Deity in a more exalted and engaging light, than the other doctrine, and under such a character, that the soul can with more freedom and fervour express towards him its emotions of piety and love, and as will enable all men to discharge with greater sincerity and confidence the duties springing out of the relation in which they stand to their Maker? This will hardly be denied; and if not, it follows most clearly, that the *moral influence* of this doctrine is more efficacious, than that of the other, in drawing us to a proper love and devout service of the Supreme Being.

In regard to a sanction of the divine laws in securing a virtuous course, it must first be asked in what way the circumstance of future punishment has any influence on the mind? Evidently by its being believed and *fully realized.* Whether punishment be infinite or limited will be of no consequence as a motive to action, any farther than it can be grasped and felt by the mind. When it is understood, that future suffering will be in exact proportion to the wicked deeds and intentions of this life, the idea is natural, easy, and rational. It accords with the understanding, and with the inherent principles of justice. There are persons, whom no moral considerations will actuate, who refuse even the wise counsels and wholesome admonitions of reason, who listen with heedless indifference to the warning voice of conscience, and to the faithful, but alarming testimony of their own hearts, and who, notwithstanding all the light, and aids, and encouragements they possess, may say, each one for himself, *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.* Such are not to be moved by any representations of futurity. There must

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be some degree of thoughtfulness before any distant prospects will be made to reflect back an influence that will be felt. If the sinner will not be arrested in his career by a full conviction, that every sin will hereafter bring down upon him a punishment, whose intenseness and duration extend to the utmost reach of his understanding, it will be in vain, that you go beyond these bounds, and plunge into the unfathomable depths of eternity. If you intend to act upon the human mind, you must keep within its sphere. Hence it is, that the doctrine, which represents future punishment as in the highest degree severe, but limited and proportionate to the wickedness of men, will produce all the effects, in regard to practical morals, that can be produced.

According to this scheme, every thing is credible, and analogous to what passes in this life. Every one will acknowledge, that the wicked should suffer in the world to come for the same reasons, that they ought to suffer in the present. No doubts can be entertained, and no illusive hopes encouraged, where it is deeply felt, that every sin will inevitably be punished in proportion to its magnitude, and that the justice and mercy of God will be blended in all his dealings with his creatures.

I have no room to continue the parallel; but it seems to me from the above brief hints, that the interests of virtue gain nothing from the doctrine of eternal misery, which would not be gained in at least an equal degree from the other doctrine; and, therefore, admitting your charge to be just, which it certainly is not, the inference you would draw, in regard to the moral tendency of unitarian preaching, amounts to nothing.

As to the doctrine of annihilation, which you have also charged upon unitarians, I have very little to say.

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That you should be egregiously mistaken with respect to facts, after what we have seen above, will surprise no one. The annihilation, or as others choose to call it, the *destruction* of the wicked, has been believed by a few speculative individuals of all denominations. Dr. Watts held, that "the children of ungodly parents, who die in infancy, are *annihilated*;" but he adopted this opinion while he was yet a trinitarian. Before you fixed this faith on unitarians, as an evidence of their immorality, you ought to have proved it to be common among them, or at all events more so than among other christians of whom you would speak more favourably. This you cannot do, and hence the injustice of your charge. There was a controversy on this subject a few years since in Mr. Aspland's Theological Repository, but a very few individuals only would appear to have been engaged. You may have been deceived from the circumstance of one of the most zealous defenders of the annihilation system, Mr. Bourn, having been a unitarian.* Dr. John Taylor and Dr. Price are said to have been of this faith, but I know not, that either of them wrote expressly in its defence. That you were deceived, however, argues little in your justification. You were not making light charges, nor such as ought to have been hazarded on slender grounds. It is not true, that this doctrine has any connexion with the prevailing tenets of unitarianism.

But in any case it could hardly be supposed, that this doctrine would be held up as defective in its moral influence. What idea can be more dismal, painful, and

* Miss Hannah Adams has failed in her usual accuracy in attributing this doctrine to the Polish socinians, as is plain from the testimony of B. Wissowatius above cited. See Hannah Adams's Dictionary of all Religions, fourth edition, p. 274.

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appalling, than that of ceasing to exist? Who can look without emotions of dread and horror into the gulf of annihilation? Where is the man, however abandoned in wickedness, however lost to a sense of virtue and duty, who, with all his crimes on his head, would not feel infinitely more comfort in the certainty of a future existence, although he must suffer the just punishment of his sins, than he would at the gloomy thought of falling into nothing, and being forgotten even by his God? Do you believe a doctrine can be preached more terrible to the sinner, than that which puts him beyond the reach of infinite mercy, goodness, and love? If the doctrine of eternal punishment has any tendency to restrain men from vice, this must act with double force, as it is doubly awful in its nature and its prospects.

The succeeding letter will be occupied with further considerations on your remarks respecting the comparative morals of unitarians and calvinists.

Yours,

A UNITARIAN OF BALTIMORE.

Professor Lindsly's Discourse.

We have before us a discourse entitled, *A Plea for the Theological Seminary at Princeton*, by Professor Lindsly of the College in that place. This discourse is principally occupied in the laudable attempt of kindling the dormant zeal of the presbyterians, in behalf of the pecuniary interests of the theological institution, which has been "established by the supreme judicatory of their church." The author labours to obviate several objections, which, it seems, have unluckily entered the heads, and contracted the purses of some well intentioned per-

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tions. In connexion with this work he resorts to appeals, reflections, exhortations, and argument, that no means may be left unemployed to rouse the apathy, move the feelings, and enlist the understanding of his presbyterian brethren. After exhausting every other topic, he comes at last to the following, which he seems to have reserved as a sort of cap to the climax.

"Behold the progress of heresy and infidelity under the disguise of rational christianity. See the artifice of the great destroyer in these latter days. He has commissioned his emissaries to assume the garb and the functions of the ministers of the gospel, that they may the more effectually sap the foundation of the whole christian edifice. He has enlisted talents, and learning, and indefatigable enterprise in this work of desolation. He has taught the deistical scoffer at revelation to step a little aside from his accustomed track; and to come forward in a new shape, but with the same malignant hostility against the truth. He is now willing to be esteemed a catholic liberal christian. But he rejects the essential divinity of the Saviour; the depravity of human nature, the doctrine of the atonement, and of justification by faith.—Or, he is a christian without holding one principle of the christian religion which can distinguish it from the religion of nature. Modern unitarianism, which is every where insinuating itself into the hearts of men naturally predisposed to its reception, because it is exactly suited to the natural character of men, is more to be dreaded than any species of infidelity ever yet avowed. It is a deadly enemy wearing the mask and the name of a friend.

"To be able to meet such an enemy on equal ground, requires much care and preparation. Many of the teachers of this heresy are thoroughly skilled in scholastic theology, logic, and metaphysics; in history, antiquities, philology, and modern science; well versed in the ancient languages; bold and subtle biblical critics; prepared to take advantage of an imprudent or incautious adversary; and thus to triumph over truth itself in the eyes of superficial observers when their sophistry seems to get the victory over its unskilful defender. Such wily disputants may now be met with in almost every section of our country. We must send into the field men sufficiently learned and disciplined fairly to encounter them. A good, honest, well-meaning, but superficially taught person will not do. Such a man had better not put his strength or rather his weakness to the test on any such occasion. He may be useful in his place. But we must

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have men who are qualified to maintain the truth against every gainsayer, who can defend the faith once delivered to the saints against the most powerful assailants. Now ministers thus qualified are not to be met with every day. They are not the production of chance. They do not grow into existence as a mere matter of course. And it is possible that, at the present time, the number would not be found to be very great of those who could successfully or reputably contend with the leading socinians in our country. This is mortifying. But the evil admits of a remedy. Although the orthodox churches generally have been negligent, culpably negligent, in regard to the education of young ministers; so much so as to give advantage to our more wary adversaries; yet we may retrace our steps, or rather commence anew, and do our future work better.

"Foster then this precious seminary, whence we may speedily hope to see issue multitudes of ardent, vigorous, able, well-furnished youth, who shall have no reason to dread the face of any foe however fierce or crafty."

It would be showing too little respect for the understanding and christian feelings of our readers, to make any remarks on this piece. We have thought it our duty to give what publicity we could to so choice a specimen of orthodox liberality, especially as it comes from a professor of a college. Comments are unnecessary.

German Reformed Church.

We have before us the Transactions of the General Synod of the German Reformed Church, held in Hagerstown, Maryland, September, 1820.* In these Transactions returns are made from *three hundred and eighty-nine* congregations, and from many others it is understood no returns were made. The whole number of congregations belonging to this church in the United States, is about *five hundred,* and the number of minis-

* Verhandlungen der General-Synode der Hochdeutschen Reformirten Kirche in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-America, gehalten in Hägersstadt, Märyland, September, 1820.

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ters not more than *ninety*. In some instances a single clergyman has charge of ten, eleven, and twelve parishes. Of the five hundred congregations about half are in Pennsylvania, more than fifty in Ohio, and others in Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The services are universally held in the German language, except in a few of the larger towns where English and German are used alternately. The tenets of this church are conformable to the Heidelberg Catechism, and the sentiments of Zuinglius.

The most important act of the last session of the Synod, was a resolution to found a Theological Seminary. This is to be under the control of twelve superintendants, chosen every three years by the Synod; and by the same body the professors are to be chosen, and their salaries fixed. The term of study required of each student is to be not more than three, nor less than two years. Fredericktown in Maryland has been selected for the location of the seminary, and the Rev. Dr. Milledoler of New-York has been chosen the Principal. The students are to be taught the usual branches of theology,* and Stapfer's work, [*Grundlegung zur wahren Religion,*] in twelve volumes, we understand is to be the leading text book. The funds of the institution are already respectable, and it is expected soon to go into operation. An admirable plan has been adopted to increase the funds, several clergymen have obligated themselves to collect and pay annually a certain sum for five or ten years. These sums

* Die Studenten sollen, wenn möglich, in den folgenden theologischen Zweigen unterrichtet werden, nämlich; in der dogmatischen, homoletischen, polemischen, und moralischen Theologie, in der biblischen Literatur, in der Kirchen-Geschichte und in der Pastoral-Theologie, und sollen im Stande seyn die Grundsprache zu verstehen.

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vary from fifty to a hundred dollars a year each, and in some instances, perhaps, less. This plan might be followed to advantage among all denominations, and by laymen as well as clergymen. The inhabitants of Fredericktown have become responsible for twelve thousand dollars. Every friend to religious knowledge and improvement must wish well to this institution, and we have no doubt it will be a means of great good to the church, by the zealous efforts of whose members it has been established.

Unitarianism of Dr. Watts.

The last number of the Christian Disciple, contains an ingenious article in reply to Dr. Miller's remarks on the sentiments of Dr. Watts, in his "Letter to the Editor of the Unitarian Miscellany." We regret that our limits will not allow us to copy this article entire. We suppose no one can read it with an unbiassed mind, and still believe, that Dr. Watts died a trinitarian. It may well be recommended to such persons, as have seen any grounds for Dr. Miller's remarks, or have had any doubts respecting the unitarian faith of Dr. Watts. We have witnessed many laboured efforts of late to prove, what nobody even thought of doubting, that when Watts wrote his Psalms and Hymns he was a trinitarian.

To Subscribers.

A second edition of several of the numbers of our first volume is in press. The delay of this edition has been produced by causes not within our control; but we hope very shortly to supply all our subscribers with such back numbers as they have not received,

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THE

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AND

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No. X] OCTOBER, 1821 [Vol. II.

Original Language of St. Matthew's Gospel.

It is not easy to tell precisely the times at which the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke were written. After comparing all the collateral evidence, Lardner has come to the conclusion, that they were written nearly at the same time, and about thirty years after our Saviour's ascension. It does not appear, that the Apostles wrote any thing early. They were exclusively employed for several years in travelling and preaching. It is argued very justly, that the Gospels must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, because they contain many predictions relating to that event, which evidently had not come to pass. According to Josephus, the Jewish war, which terminated in the ruin of that nation, commenced A. D. 66. Several of the ancient christian writers testify, that Mark was solicited by the brethren at Rome to write for their benefit what Peter had preached to them. From the best accounts Peter must have gone to Rome about A. D. 63. Hence Lardner concludes, that Mark's Gospel was not written before this period; and also, that the Roman brethren did not then know of any written Gospel.

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Origen says there was a tradition, that Matthew wrote first; but Basnage gives the precedence to Luke's Gospel, and for this opinion there is some internal evidence. The introduction to Luke's Gospel strongly implies, that Theophilus, to whom he writes, had never seen a written account of "those things wherein he had been instructed;" which would not have been likely to be the case, if any Gospels by the other Apostles were at that time in existence.* From these facts it would seem, that when Mark and Luke wrote they had neither of them seen any other Gospel, or known of any having been written. But the Apostles were in different countries, and one might have written without the knowledge of another; yet they could not in the nature of things have remained long thus ignorant. In short, there is good reason to believe, that the Gospels in question were written nearly at the same time, and at the period above mentioned. It is more than probable, also, that neither of the authors was acquainted with the Gospels of the others when he wrote; but which was first in order cannot be ascertained.

It has been a common belief from very early times, that Matthew's Gospel was first written in the Hebrew language. This was stated by Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, and Eusebius; yet Lardner has given many cogent reasons why it was probably written in Greek.† Seve-

* St. Luke's Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles, written also by St. Luke, formerly constituted but one book. In the commencement of the Acts, the author refers to his Gospel, and calls it πρωτον λογον, the *first part*, or as our translation has it, the *former treatise*. He then takes up the narrative precisely where he had left it in what is now called his Gospel. Hence the ancients quoted the Gospel and the Acts promiscuously under the title of the History of St. Luke.

† The words of Papias are, Ματθαιος μεν ουν Εβραιδι διαλεκτῳ τα λογια συνεγραψατο, ἡρμηνευσε δ' αυτα

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ral other learned and eminent moderns have been of the same opinion. Dr. Jortin says, in his Discourses concerning the Christian Religion, that "in the time of Christ and his Apostles, the Greek was really the universal language. The New Testament is a proof of it, if proof were wanting. And this is one reason among many others why St. Matthew probably wrote his Gospel in Greek." Even among the ancients themselves the opinion does not seem to have been very common, that Matthew wrote in Hebrew. They seldom, perhaps never, quote the Greek as a translation. No person is mentioned on any good authority, as having been the translator. Jerom says, it was uncertain by whom it was done. In the time of Theophylact it was usually attributed to John; and at other times tradition referred it to James. Furthermore, no marks of a translation are visible in the Greek Gospel of Matthew, as it has come down to us. These reasons among others induced Lardner to believe, that it was first written in Greek. Michaelis was of a contrary opinion;*

ὡς ἐδυνατο ἑκαστος. Eusebius says he was a man of weak understanding—σφοδρα—σμικρος ων τον νουν—and the latter part of the clause respecting the Gospel of Matthew, namely, *and every one interpreted it as he could*, has been usually thought to be in proof. But if the truth were known, it is probable he meant only, that as the christians of that day did not all understand Hebrew equally well, they interpreted it severally according to their knowledge. This Papias was bishop of Hieropolis, and flourished about A. D. 116. Nothing remains of his works, except a few extracts preserved in the writings of Eusebius. Irenaeus flourished, according to Lardner, about the year 178; Origen, 230; and Eusebius 315. It is worthy of remark, that Origen gives no other authority than "tradition," for supposing Matthew's Gospel was first written in Hebrew.

* Introduction to the New Testament, Part I. chap. 4. sec. 1.

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and Less inclines to the belief, that Matthew himself composed his Gospel in both languages.*

This last opinion, perhaps, may be better sustained, than either of the others. It obviates all the difficulties, which are felt in reconciling various testimonies. St. Matthew was no doubt as well acquainted with the Greek, as the other Apostles. It is likely a great number of the Jews in Palestine were not familiar with this language, and he might think it expedient for their benefit to write it in Hebrew; and for the Christians at large among the Gentiles, where the Greek was chiefly spoken, he might perceive the necessity of its being in that language,—for it must be remembered, that none of the Gospels were written, till the religion had extended itself over many countries. If he wrote first in Hebrew, it is quite certain a translation was made into Greek immediately after, and it is as reasonable to suppose it was made by his own hands as any other.

Origin of the peculiar Doctrines of Calvinism.

I CONFESS it is difficult to imagine why these doctrines were first invented, and how they should have found favour when they were first proposed; for they are not laid down in the scriptures, and they have no loveliness of their own to recommend them. It might have seemed like humility to attribute, as they do, all agency to God; and it might be very well to humble ourselves thus, if we could do it without at the same time throw-

* Wenn aber, wie eben daraus zu erhellen scheint, Matthaeus sein Evangelium Hebraeisch geschrieben hat, so ist aus andren gründen eben so gewiss, das er es auch Griechisch ausgefertiget. *Geschichte der Rel. Erst. T.* 540. See also, Authenticity of the New Testament, translated by Kingdon, p. 87.

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ing off our responsibility. If all our actions, as these doctrines presuppose, are produced by the direct agency of God, they are not ours, and if they are wrong we are not guilty. The proper reverence is to ascribe to him those powers, which he has given, and left us at liberty to use them well or ill. But these doctrines did not originate in this overstrained humility. They were first suggested in the bitterness of dispute. The maxims were introduced and maintained one after another, till they were framed into a system, which was not very consistent, but what was of more importance to the framers, would admit of being defended.

Augustin, in the sixth century, was the first to propose this system. It seems that Pelagius, a British monk, had declared that good works only are valuable in the sight of God, and Augustin took up the controversy against him. This he maintained with great severity, advancing one proposition and article after another, till probably much to his own astonishment he found himself the author of a faith entirely new. In opposition to the principle of merit, he declared that divine grace is necessary to bend the will, and where this grace is not afforded, we have only power to do evil, but none to do good; that actions which seem to be religious, if performed without divine grace, are nothing more than splendid sins. He also maintained, that all men sinned in Adam, and should bear the everlasting punishment of his crime, but the thought of infants seemed to stagger his faith, till he ingeniously discovered that though they were in hell, their punishment would not be very severe, and they would choose it in preference to annihilation. He then laid down, as a consequence of his doctrine of our want of freedom,

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that God had predestinated some to eternal life, and others to destruction.

Such were his opinions, which one would suppose could not prevail by their own reasonableness and truth; but Augustin knew human nature too well to place much dependence on those recommendations. He had great influence in the Church, and Pelagius had none; he procured a sentence of council condemning the faith of his adversary, who was banished and died in obscurity; and then the opinions of Augustin prevailed almost without contradiction; for there was reward in keeping them, and there were not many so weakly honest, nor so imprudently fond of truth, as to embrace the faith of a powerless, neglected, and banished man.

[Liberal Recorder.

Remarks on the Evangelical Magazine.

Our readers will probably recollect, that in a late number we took occasion to speak of the Evangelical Magazine, published at Richmond. We mentioned it as a work conducted with ability, and we have had no reason since to alter our opinion. In saying this, however, we did not mean to extort a compliment to our "good paper," and above all to our "handsome type," for we do not think either of these any better or handsomer than it should be.

We are extremely glad, that our apprehensions prove not to have been well founded; but we really think the editors are too hard upon us in not allowing, that we had apparently good cause for our impressions. But this is a thing of no importance.

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For several months this Magazine has been a devoted and an active champion in the ranks hostile to unitarianism. The Review of Dr. Channing's Ordination Sermon, or of Stuart's Letters, was portentous. There was nothing alarming in the omen itself, but it told of things to come. The presage has been verified. Every month has given additional testimony to the bounty of the editors in making their readers acquainted with some of the weak, or absurd, or dangerous things of unitarianism, and we are now told that a great deal is yet to come. The Presbyterians of Virginia must by this time feel very strong in the controversy, and none the less so for having seen nothing except on one side. To these labours we do not object, but rather applaud them. The christian, who is not zealous in what he believes to be truth, is but an indifferent christian. We have not been aware, however, that Virginia was in so much danger as to require these extraordinary efforts. But we confess, that they, who are on the spot, ought to be better judges than ourselves. We should be glad if some means could be devised of dealing fairly with the people, and of making them acquainted with the arguments on both sides before they judge. This we cannot expect in the present state of things; yet some good will be done. Every candid man will perceive the harsh outlines and false colouring of the picture which is sent out, and will begin to look for something truer to nature and the reality. He will *inquire*, and this is the first step to truth. We are willing to leave him there.

We doubt whether any valuable purpose would be answered by our undertaking a controversy with this Magazine, although the gauntlet is thrown with considerable formality. It is not probable, that either of our

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books is read by more than a very small number of the subscribers to the other. And, besides, with the topics which have as yet been brought forward in the Magazine, most of our readers are familiar. We are friendly to temperate discussion, because we think it promotes truth. The editors of the Magazine have opened so large a field in their last number, and promise to take so wide a range, that it is more than probable we may occasionally cross their course. We shall never be reluctant to do so, where we think it required by justice to ourselves, or to the cause we maintain, or where any thing can be added to the interests of piety and truth.

There are yet other reasons, why we could not expect to engage, with much hope of profit, in a controversy with the writers of this Magazine. We will mention two or three only in very few words.

1. These gentlemen do not seem to have taken such enlarged views of the subject, as are requisite for conducting a controversy on equitable principles. As far as we can learn from the abundance, which they have already written, their knowledge of the present state and actual sentiments of unitarians is very limited, and confined chiefly to such quotations as have been collected by some of the more violent and hostile writers of the trinitarian party. This mass of quotations is called unitarianism. And these, for the most part, consist of the indiscreet sayings of some two or three individuals, which have not the remotest connexion with the general principles of unitarianism, and which not one unitarian in ten thousand, probably, would adopt with more readiness, than the editors themselves. And yet these are perpetually quoted and harped upon, as fundamental articles. Nor would we venture to enumerate the notes of admiration, which have been marshall-

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ed in double and triple array at the end of certain phrases to make the people stop, and wonder, and shudder at the appalling heresies of unitarians. Now we ask if this be argument, or candour, or seriousness, or any thing, that will be likely to do justice to an opponent, or advance a good cause? We believe not.

2. These gentlemen suffer themselves to make such insinuations, and employ such language, in regard to our opinions, as must destroy our confidence either in their good intentions, their judgment, or the accuracy of their perceptions, and without confidence in all of these we could hardly look for any good results from a controversy. They tell us, for instance, that "the leaders of the unitarian sect scruple not to attribute *bad faith*, as well as *bad reasoning* to the greatest of the apostles;" that unitarians allow themselves to say, "that the apostles reasoned inconclusively, and that the blessed Saviour himself might be mistaken." We are said "not only to affirm, that the apostles reasoned *falsely*, but to insinuate that they did so *knowingly*." These are a few specimens among many; but they are enough to convince every one acquainted with the subject, that it would be the extreme of folly to argue with men, who, either through ignorance, or the blind zeal of prejudice, or a want of proper respect for themselves, or from any other cause, could fall into such gross misrepresentations. But this is not all. These perversions are made the very elements of unitarianism, and perpetually recurred to as first principles, and enough to overthrow any argument, that can be adduced. What can be more easy, than to nullify any position a unitarian, or any other person can advance on a religious subject, by affirming, that this man believes the apostles might be guilty of "bad faith" and "bad reasoning," and "the

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Saviour himself might be mistaken?" Who, that believes this report, will listen to him afterwards? This artifice is sufficiently antiquated, but it is so unworthy of an ingenuous and honourable controvertist, that we are sorry to find it practised in any quarter, and much more in the one of which we are now speaking. If these gentlemen can really convince themselves, that the opinions of any individual, who has borne the unitarian name, can be tortured into such shapes, let them deal as severely as they please with this individual, but let them have the common candour not to fasten these opinions on others, who would shrink from them with as much horror as themselves. In regard to the language of our Saviour, it is the universal sentiment of unitarians, that it is of the same authority and obligation as if proceeding from God himself. Those, who would know on what principles they interpret the writings of St. Paul, we refer to Locke's Essay prefixed to his Paraphrase.

3. These writers, also, sometimes indulge in a levity, and a sort of half sneering flippancy, to which our feelings will not permit us to descend in the serious, and solemn concerns of religion. Our meaning may be partly illustrated by the following example. After speaking of the characteristics, which a man must possess before he can be accounted a christian, the writer adds by way of contrast; "But if he laughs things of this sort to scorn, and tells us of his acquaintance with the evidences of christianity, and talks much of Griesbach and the various readings—why, we cannot give him the right hand of fellowship as a *christian* brother, although ready to show him any kindness as a fellow creature." The spirit, which dictated this passage, is not such as we should be willing to cultivate. With such habits of mind as this would be likely to induce, we should fear,

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that piety would not long sustain its warmth, nor benevolence its generous influences. We have been accustomed to consider religion a subject of vast and sacred concernment, which brings us more sensibly under the immediate inspection of a holy God, which points out our relations, duties, and hopes, and which is not to be approached with levity, or with affected contempt for the conscientious opinions of those, who do not think precisely with us. We are sensible, that it is not always easy to write on a controverted point with perfect freedom from bias. yet no leaning to an approved opinion in religion can justify want of candour and seriousness. The differences between trinitarians and ourselves are matters of simple fact and argument, and ought to be discussed as such, without any frightful exclamations, or ungracious epithets, or perverted statements, or unrighteous insinuations. These have nothing to do with religion. We shall try to avoid them ourselves, and hope our opponents will not be long in discovering their inutility and evil tendency. When we *argue* with trinitarians, we wish to consider them rational beings, who can understand a fair statement, and estimate the strength of an argument; who will not be frightened by an exclamation, nor duped by a fallacy; whose honest opinions deserve respect, and whose religious feelings are not to be assailed by coarse sneers, or the unholy weapons of ridicule; and we should be glad to meet with similar returns.*

* We assent to the justice of the criticism, contained in a note in the last number of the Magazine, on the word *possible*, as used in a particular instance in Sparks' Letters on the Episcopal Church. The rest of the note is cabalistic. More is intended no doubt than is expressed.

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Jeremy Taylor on Diversity of Opinion among Christians.

From the Liberty of Prophesying.

The infinite variety of opinions in matters of religion, as they have troubled Christendom with interests, factions, and partialities; so have they caused great divisions of the heart, and variety of thoughts and designs amongst pious and prudent men. For they all, seeing the inconveniences which the disunion of persuasions and opinions have produced directly or accidentally, have thought themselves obliged to stop this inundation of mischiefs, and have made attempts accordingly. But it hath happened to most of them as to a mistaken physician, who gives excellent physic but misapplies it, and so misses of his cure; so have these men, their attempts have therefore been ineffectual; for they put their help to a wrong part, or they have endeavoured to cure the symptoms, and have let the disease alone till it seemed incurable. Some have endeavoured to re-unite these factions by propounding such a guide, which they were all bound to follow; hoping that the unity of a guide would have persuaded unity of minds; but who this guide should be at last became such a question, that it was made part of the fire that was to be quenched; so far was it from extinguishing any part of the flame.

Others thought of a rule, and this must be the means of union, or nothing could do it. But supposing all the world had been agreed of this rule, yet the interpretation of it was so full of variety, that this also became part of the disease, for which the cure was pretended. All men resolved upon this, that though they yet had not hit upon the right, yet some way must be thought

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upon to reconcile differences in opinion; thinking so long as this variety should last, Christ's kingdom was not advanced, and the work of the Gospel went on but slowly. Few men in the mean time considered, that so long as men had such variety of principles, such several constitutions, educations, tempers, and distempers, hopes, interests, and weaknesses, degrees of light, and degrees of understanding, it was impossible all should be of one mind. And what is impossible to be done, is not necessary it should be done; and therefore, although variety of opinions was impossible to be cured, and they who attempted it, did like him who claps his shoulder to the ground to stop an earthquake, yet the inconveniences arising from it might possibly be cured, not by uniting their beliefs, that was to be despaired of, but by curing that which caused these mischiefs and accidental inconveniences of their disagreeings. For although these inconveniences which every man sees and feels were consequent to this diversity of persuasions, yet it was but accidentally and by chance; inasmuch as we see that in many things, and they of great concernment, men allow to themselves and to each other a liberty of disagreeing, and no hurt neither. And certainly if diversity of opinions were of itself the cause of mischiefs, it would be so ever, that is, regularly and universally; but that we see it is not; for there are disputes in Christendom concerning matters of greater concernment than most of those opinions that distinguish sects, and make factions; and yet because men are permitted to differ in those great matters, such evils are not consequent to such differences, as are to the uncharitable managing of smaller and more inconsiderable questions.—

But men are now adays, and indeed always have been, since the expiration of the first blessed ages of christi-

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anity, so in love with their own fancies and opinions, as to think faith and all Christendom is concerned in their support and maintenance, and whoever is not so fond and does not dandle them like themselves, it grows up to a quarrel, which because it is in *materiâ theologiæ*, or relates to theology, is made a quarrel in religion, and God is entitled to it; and then if you are once thought an enemy to God, it is our duty to persecute you even to death; we do God good service in it; when if we should examine the matter rightly, the question is either in *materiâ non revelata*, or *minus evidenti*, or *non necessariâ*, either it is not revealed, or not so clearly, but that wise and honest men may be of different minds, or else it is not of the foundation of faith, but a remote superstructure, or else of mere speculation, or perhaps when all comes to all, it is a false opinion, or a matter of human interest, that we have so zealously contended for; for to one of these heads most of the disputes of Christendom may be reduced; so that I believe the present factions, or the most are from the same cause which St. Paul observed in the *Corinthian* schism, *When there are divisions among you, are ye not carnal?*—

It is not the differing opinions that is the cause of the present ruptures, but want of charity; it is not the variety of understandings, but the disunion of wills and affections; it is not the several principles, but the several ends that cause our miseries; our opinions commence, and are upheld according as our turns are served and our interests are preserved, and there is no cure for us, but piety and charity. A holy life will make our belief holy, if we consult not humanity and its imperfections in the choice of our religion, but search for truth without designs, save only of acquiring heaven, and then be

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as careful to preserve charity, as we were to get a point of faith, I am much persuaded we should find out more truths by this means; or however, which is the main of all, we shall be secured though we miss them; and then we are well enough.—

All the mischiefs proceed not from this, that all men are not of one mind, for that is neither necessary nor possible, but that every opinion is made an article of faith, every article is a ground of a quarrel, every quarrel makes a faction, every faction is zealous, and all zeal pretends for God, and whatsoever is for God cannot be too much; we by this time are come to that pass, we think we love not God except we hate our brother, and we have not the virtue of religion, unless we persecute all religions but our own; for lukewarmness is so odious to God and man, that we proceeding furiously upon these mistakes, by supposing we preserve the body, we destroy the soul of religion, or by being zealous for faith or which is all one, for that which we mistake for faith, we are cold in charity, and so lose the reward of both.

Sixth Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller. On the Comparative Morals of Unitarians and Calvinists.

Sir,

It must fully appear, by this time, into what mistakes you have unhappily fallen respecting the topics and tendency of unitarian preaching, and with what show of justice you have made and reiterated the charge, that, "this mode of preaching is more acceptable to the taste of carnal, worldly men, than any other kind of preaching." It must fully appear, with what singular infelicity you attempted to discuss a subject, which you had so slightly investigated, and more especially when

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it is realized, that the only possible tendency of your assertions was to the reproach and injury of the persons, whose religious opinions and character you have assumed the freedom thus to assail.

You next attempt a formal defence of your position, that *we look in vain for the monuments of the reforming and purifying power* of the unitarian system. You have at length come to the only point upon which the discussion was originally started; but even here, instead of redeeming other failures, your attempt has been if possible still more unsuccessful. Your defence, as far as it can be called a defence, is altogether hypothetical. You prove nothing, cite no instances, adduce no facts. Instead of coming to plain statements and unequivocal examples, which alone can have any bearing on the subject, you inquire whether *sound conversions*, or *genuine revivals of religion* are known among unitarians? What is this inquiry to the purpose? The question relates simply to the *character* of those, who have embraced this faith, and not to the means by which this character has been formed; to the existing "monuments" of its power, and not to the manner in which these monuments have been reared. Why ask about conversions, if you find the fruits of conversion? To say these do not exist is begging the question; it is the *petitio principii* of the dialectician; taking for granted the very thing, which you were called on to prove.

You have evaded this the most important part of the subject, and drawn the attention of your readers to the good effects, which you say have been produced in particular cases by your own sentiments. After a vivid picture of this sort, you abruptly ask the question, whether "unitarianism can show such effects?" And then answer it as abruptly, "if it can, they are unknown to

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me." Do you think this good reasoning? Are you willing to judge of the effects of unitarianism "all over the world," by your personal observation? As you probably have never lived a week together in a society composed of unitarians, how is it possible, let these effects have been what they might, that they should not be *unknown* to you? Under such circumstances, how could you know the power of unitarian principles to subdue the stubborn will, soften the hardened heart, humble the proud, restrain the vicious, call forth the pious affections of the devout worshipper, promote christian harmony, purity, and love, and, in short, to ensure the conduct of a sincere, humble, and faithful follower of Jesus? These are things, which work, or ought to work, silently in the heart, and show themselves in the temper and private character of individuals. The moment they are allowed to go abroad, and be blazoned to the world, they leave no trivial grounds for suspecting more of hypocrisy, than of humble piety, or of the movings of the holy spirit of God. Hence your argument for the immorality of unitarians, drawn from your ignorance of the actual effects of their principles, is as illogical as it is uncharitable. It is certainly extraordinary, that you should think it sufficient proof against the christian morals and piety of any sect, that such exercises as usually attend these graces were *unknown to you*, when your personal observation was so circumscribed, and your means of knowledge so limited.

It is no part of my undertaking to boast of the high religious attainments of those with whom I accord in sentiment, and unite in worship, or to hold them up as more holy than other christians, and ready to cry out on all occasions, like Jehu of old, "Come see my zeal for the Lord." I aim at nothing more than a plain de-

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fence, a bare vindication. I shall not, therefore, impose any tax upon your patience by going into a history of their conversions, or detailing remarkable instances of their piety, self denial, humility; of their patience in tribulation, and meekness under persecution; of their forbearance when assailed by the reproaches and scorn of the world; of their perseverance through evil report and good report in accomplishing what their principles and the voice of conscience dictate, and in fine, of their joyful triumph over every calamity, even death itself, while sustained by the bright hopes, and cheering anticipations inspired by their views of the religion of the Saviour. These things I willingly leave to speak for themselves, and have much reason to hope and trust, that they will speak loudly to every honest inquirer, and candid observer. Had you known more of the persons, with whose religious feelings you have dealt so harshly, I am constrained to believe you would have been less ready to ask, "who has ever heard" of these things?

But since you have brought this subject forward with a special view of inferring from your remarks a want of morals in unitarians, I am not disposed to dismiss it without further notice. Much, however, which is applicable in this place, has been anticipated in what was said concerning regeneration in my fourth letter. Two or three particulars will admit of further examination.

What strikes one most forcibly in your view of the subject, is, that you confound distinctions, and make no difference between conversion, and the object to be attained by conversion. Yet surely these are not the same thing. Conversion is a *means* for the attainment of a certain end. And what is this end, but such a measure of knowledge, virtue, piety, and holiness, as

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constitutes a truly religious character? Conversion is valuable only for its effects, and yet you speak of it as being itself the only thing of importance, and as if these effects could be produced in no way except by the influence of this doctrine, not as others think they ought to interpret it, but as you choose to interpret it yourself.

Admit the fact, that unitarians do not hold the necessity of conversion in the calvinistic sense; suppose them to believe that God is not limited in his power or wisdom, and may employ a great variety of means in bringing his rational creatures to a sense of their sins, a knowledge of their duty, an humble contrition, sincere repentance, and practical holiness. By what process can these facts be framed into an argument against their moral character? Morality does not consist in a doctrine, an opinion, or a pretence. The apostle says, that *the fruit of the spirit is, in all, goodness, and righteousness, and truth.* Where this fruit appears, why do you stop to ask by what operations of the spirit it has been produced? Are you not contented, that God should have taken his own way? Unitarians hold as firmly as calvinists, that their sins must be forsaken, their wicked hearts renewed, and all their passions, thoughts, and affections, brought into subjection to the will of God, before they can expect his promised favour, or have any hopes of the rewards of his glory. But they do not, like calvinists, hold that God is restricted in the mode he may adopt to accomplish this purpose; nor do they consider the mode of greater moment, than the purpose itself.

As we proceed, it is desirable to have distinctly in mind the true import of the calvinistic notion of conversion. This may be discovered in the following

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extracts from the Confession of Faith. "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, *and those only*, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call by his word and spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ.—This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, *who is altogether passive therein*, until, being quickened and removed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it."* From these words it seems, that the conversion of a sinner consists in a simple execution of a divine decree made from all eternity, without any regard to the future disposition or conduct of the person to be converted, or as it is expressed in another place, "without any foresight of faith or good works." The sinner has no concern in the work, for he is declared to be "altogether passive therein." This is plain language, and needs no illustration.

As unitarians, and many christians of other denominations, can find no such doctrine in the scriptures, but conceive all the positive parts, and, indeed, the whole tenour of scripture opposed to it, they cannot of course believe it in the sense in which it is here stated. And if they could find evidence, that the mode of irresistible influence is sometimes resorted to by the Deity to convert sinners, the powerful testimony of experience would convince them, that the doctrine which teaches the *necessity* of this mode under all circumstances, is most fallacious in its indications, and most injurious in its consequences.

* Confession of Faith, chap. x. § 1. 2.

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If there be any truth, or any value in the doctrine, it must carry with itself an unfailing testimony. That is, persons under the arbitrary operations of the spirit must have infallible means of knowing the fact, that they may not be deceived by their own imaginations, and be led into a false and dangerous security. An irresistible influence of the Deity is in all respects miraculous, and as such must operate with a violence on the established laws of the human constitution, which cannot be mistaken. And yet, what has been the test to which appeals have universally been made? Has it not been certain impressions, emotions, feelings, transports, ecstacies, which are usually the exuberant growth of a warm imagination? Has there ever been an instance in which appeals have been made to the understanding? Has any one ever made it appear, that his intellect was enlightened, his judgment improved, or his wisdom increased by the irresistible agency of the divine spirit? No. How is it, then, that the spirit of God always acts upon that quality of our nature, which of all others is the most fallible, fluctuating, and deceptive? The very same effects, and to their fullest extent, which are urged as a proof of divine interposition, are frequently produced by natural causes, and exist where there is no renewal of heart, or reformation of character. Is it credible, that the Supreme Being descends into the hearts of men with a miraculous agency of his spirit, without giving them at the same time light and power to judge between his operations, and the deceptions of a heated imagination?

You will say, probably, that such persons as are really the objects of this agency, are never without a conviction, which with them amounts to absolute certainty. I am aware this is asserted by many, who are sincere,

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and have a confidence in the reality of their impressions. But in my mind, no stronger proof can be given of the fallaciousness of the doctrine. In the first place, their convictions come through the feelings and the fancy. And then, these persons are by no means always distinguished for more than ordinary purity of morals, or warmth of piety, so that it has been said, with too much truth, by a writer more distinguished for his genius than his piety, "if we are told a man is *religious*, we still ask, *what are his morals?*" And last of all, these persons often have totally opposite opinions respecting some of the most important articles of christian truth, which they all profess with equal confidence to receive from a divine illumination. But the spirit of God can dictate only truth, and truth is always the same. With what encouragement can we rely on the convictions of those, who, with equal sincerity and confidence, make contradictory assertions? When it shall happen, that all persons, who profess to have immediate aid from above to free them from sin and enlighten them with truth, shall be found uniformly more zealous in doing the deeds of piety and love, than other christians of humbler pretensions; and when they shall agree in reporting the truths, which they have received from the instructions of the spirit, so far at least as to avoid contradictions and inconsistences, they will exhibit better reasons for believing themselves actuated by the irresistible agency of the spirit of God.

Again, if a change is thus miraculously wrought, how does it happen, that in such a great number of instances the effect soon dies away? Look around among those, who have been the subjects of what are commonly called religious revivals, and observe how large a proportion return in a short time to their former condition and

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habits. The most zealous, confident, and ecstatic, will frequently be among the first to sink back to the apathy, from which at one time they imagined themselves to have been raised by the special agency of the Holy Spirit. Will you say that such are not truly converted, or that they resist the spirit? The first is certain, but of the last who is to judge? The person, who falls away, is as certain of being under a spiritual influence, as any one who retains this conviction for years, and even through his whole life. But falling away was a proof, that he was deceived. Very true; yet if one may be deceived for a month or a day, so may another as long as he lives. Hence it is the very excess of presumption to set up any pretensions, or make any assertions in the case.

Nor ought any one to rely on this kind of influence, till he can prove that the days of miracles have never ceased. Conversion, upon calvinistic principles, is as much a miracle, as it would be to stop the sun in its course, or raise the dead to life. But as no proof can be advanced, that miracles have been wrought since the time of the apostles even for great purposes, such as promoting the divine dispensations, or the general interests of mankind, where is the humility, modesty, or good sense in any man's pretending, that the Supreme Being has condescended to change the course of nature in his behalf, especially when the same argument, which he uses to convince himself of this fact, is used with equal assurance by others, who are confessedly deceived?

The calvinistic notion of conversion is, moreover, dangerous in its moral tendency. As the unconverted are *passive* in this work, they can do nothing till they are moved by the spirit; and you may be quite sure

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men will make no vigorous attempts to do what they are persuaded is impossible, particularly when these attempts interfere with their worldly wishes, demand sacrifices, and oppose their inclinations. They will proceed in the road of sin, and the way to ruin, with very little concern, while they feel that they are spell bound, and can turn neither to the right nor to the left, till the kind hand of heaven shall break their chains, take the scales from their eyes, and force them into the path of light, safety, and peace. And after this benevolent deed of heaven is performed, it by no means appears, that all danger is removed. Human nature is not changed. Much room is left to cherish many seeds of no good promise, and to foster the growth of many unpropitious affections, whose fruits will add little to the stock of virtue, or to the ornament of a good life. The very self-complacency, which allows a man to rank himself in a station above his brethren, and to claim in his favour the peculiar agency of his Maker, denotes much of spiritual pride, and but little of that meek and lowly spirit inculcated by the example, doctrines, and commands of our Saviour. The doctrine in question, with its various appendages and outworks of election, reprobation, total depravity, human inability, and compulsory grace, approves itself to my understanding as one of the most immoral and pernicious, that has ever been started as a doctrine of christianity. It does comparatively little mischief, because it is seldom believed, except in connexion with other doctrines, which serve as a sort of counterpoise to its perverting tendency. History tells us of little, that we could desire to remember, respecting the morals of that sect, which has made this doctrine the leading tenet of its belief.*

* The Antinomians make election and irresistible grace the prominent features of their faith. "As the elect," they say, "cannot fall

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History also affords another dismal picture of the deplorable effects of this doctrine, in the annals of fanaticism. Men have gone mad in the belief, that their frenzy was the inward workings of the spirit of God. Next have come murders and rapines, persecutions and tortures, hatred and malice, and every detestable vice, which could disgrace human nature and demoralize society. Keep within the compass of the Reformation, and run through the records of fanaticism from the fratricide of Alphonsus Diaz, to the piteous delusions, which in recent times have bewildered the followers of Huntington, Brothers, and Southcott. The madness of Muncer, Stubner, and Storck, who kindled a civil war in Germany, sacrificed the lives of many credulous followers, and committed the greatest excesses under pretence of being actuated by a divine impulse; the wild reveries, which broke out in so many shapes of intolerance and cruelty during the reign of the unfortunate Charles, and the existence of the Commonwealth; the ravings of Muggleton and Reeves, who declared it to be

from grace, nor forfeit the divine favour, so it follows, that the wicked actions they commit, and the violations of the divine law, with which they are chargeable, are not *really sinful*, nor are to be considered as instances of their departing from the law of God; and that consequently, they have no occasion either to forsake their sins, or to break them off by repentance." *Mosheim's Church History, Vol. V. p.* 412.

They maintain, that "the elect cannot possibly do any thing displeasing to God, and that consequently no sins, however monstrous, would at all impair or endanger their everlasting blessedness." *Grant's Summary, Vol. II. p.* 499.

Such is the literal import of the doctrine when undisguised and unmixed with others of a more rational and moral nature. That its effects on the morals, when left to have its free and natural tendency, have been most pernicious, will abundantly appear to any one who will be at the trouble of turning to the above references.

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the unpardonable sin to reject what they called their spiritual message; the scorching zeal of the Puritans, which was ready to burst out with its consuming fires upon all, who did not profess to seek the Lord under the same influences as themselves,—these facts and events, with numerous others of a similar nature, have been so many practical illustrations of the doctrine of conversion by an irresistible agency of the divine spirit.

Now we frankly confess we cannot receive a doctrine as coming from God, not a trace of which we can find in the scriptures, which is so fallacious in the testimony it gives of a divine origin, which is so defective in its practical tendency, and which has actually been made an instrument in bringing down the greatest disorders, evils, and wretchedness upon the church, and upon society. The only authority on which it rests, is the testimony of individuals. And in what does this consist? It appeals to certain emotions, feelings, and frames of mind, which may come as readily from rational and mechanical, as from spiritual sources. Speaking of the particulars of this testimony, the eloquent James Foster observes, "They give a handle to every wretched enthusiast to impute his ravings, and follies, and wild starts of imagination, to the *spirit of the living God*. And thus they consecrate delusion and imposture, and, if these be of a licentious and impure tendency, enable them with the more ease to extirpate the natural seeds of virtue, and corrupt the morals."*

* *James Foster's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 111. The natural *effects* of this doctrine are not unaptly portrayed by Bishop Hoadly, in what he says of the extent to which some persons pursue the doctrine of Christ's merits as flowing from imputed righteousness, or a satisfaction. Speaking of those, who are mistaken in the terms of divine acceptance, he says, "They are all such as, (though they do not say it and speak it aloud, in so many words, yet,) think and speak in such

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From what has been said, it is to be inferred that unitarians differ from calvinists not in the object to be attained by conversion, but respecting the manner by which it is attained. Unitarians hold to a divine influence, and that all men are converted by this influence, but they do not believe it to be irresistible; or miraculous. They conceive that God is always ready to second their good intentions and purposes, to aid their virtuous efforts, listen to their prayers, show mercy to the penitent, and to pardon their sins when repented of and forsaken. They believe conversion to be the work of God, not in the way of an arbitrary, irresistible agency, but by the innumerable motives and inducements, which he employs to bring men to a just sense of their duty, a deep reverence of his character, love of his laws, and a habitual desire for purity of mind, and holiness of life. Whatever leads to these results, may be considered as proceeding from the spirit of God. This spirit may operate through good instructions, or any thing, in fact, which disposes the mind to thoughtfulness and serious inquiry. Sudden and deep afflictions, an impressive sermon, certain passages in the word of God, may, by the agency of the divine spirit, be brought down upon the soul with a power, which will terminate in conversion by opening the eyes of men to their true

a manner of the merits of Christ's sufferings, and the imputation of his personal holiness to believers, as to make his moral laws of none effect, and to render all virtue in Christians a poor, insignificant, unnecessary matter; unless it be the great virtue of applying the merits of Christ to ourselves, a virtue, which they who have most spirits are most frequently observed to be masters of, and which hath been too often seen to be founded upon the greatest degree of confidence and the greatest degree of guilt, mixed and tempered together by a strong fancy and imagination." *Hoadly on the Terms of Acceptance with God*, p. 77.

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character, and causing them to see the folly and danger of sin. But in these operations, there is no force or compulsion; nothing which may not be resisted, and which is not resisted by all, who, under the same circumstances, receive no impression.

This is consistent with the scripture view of the subject. Conversion is never represented there as coming from an irresistible act of divine power, or as being brought about in consequence of a divine decree. We are told to "grieve not the spirit of God." But why thus told, unless the spirit may be grieved, or resisted? "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted," says the apostle. But why this command, if we have not power to obey it, and are to be *passive*, till it shall please God to raise us up by a miracle? St. Paul's conversion was miraculous, and is the most remarkable one recorded in scripture, and yet, in his speech before Agrippa, he says, that he "was not *disobedient* to the heavenly vision," intimating, as a learned writer has observed, that his freedom of choice was not restrained, but that his conversion was on his part an act of voluntary obedience and virtue.

In your Sermon you said, that the position you had taken could easily be illustrated and confirmed by tracing the history of American Unitarianism. You were called on to undertake this task as a duty of justice, and to compare the results with the history of Presbyterianism, and let the world see by a fair parallel in what respects unitarians have fallen so immensely behind their brethren in morals and piety, as to be ranked among Mohammedans and Jews, and not to deserve the name of christians. No request could be more reasonable; and considering the extent and serious nature of your charges, it could hardly be doubted that you would

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comply with it most readily. Your own vindication, if nothing else, would seem to have been a motive sufficiently powerful. All the testimony which can possibly be adduced in your favour, depends on having this point thoroughly and satisfactorily cleared up. To meet the subject fairly, it should have been the theme, the cardinal topic, of your whole Reply.

But so far from this, it is actually despatched in one short sentence. "I do not intend," you observe, "to follow this gentleman far, in the comparison which he so zealously and confidently urges, between Presbyterians and Unitarians, on the score of purity of morals." That is, you decline making the comparison, by which alone the truth of your assertions can be substantiated. The question is, whether unitarians are less moral as a sect than other sects? This question must be decided, if decided at all, by a comparison. You have answered it in the affirmative, but without proof. Those who come under your censure, do not think your individual authority sufficient, in a case of so much importance to them. They do not approve the tribunal which you have instituted, and as they recognize no Inquisition, they think it a duty, and claim the privilege to protest against your decisions. They believed you to have gone upon false premises, and accordingly you were desired to review your ground, and at all events give the public a detail of the facts and reasons, by which you felt yourself bound to reveal to the world the moral disability, and licentious habits of unitarians.

Nothing more was asked of you, than to perform what you said might easily be done, namely, to let the voice of history speak in your behalf, implying, it is true, what certainly was not unreasonable, that you would substitute facts for conjectures and insinuations, and

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soften the boldness of your charges by the formality of a few plain statements and direct proofs. Examine the history of unitarianism with minuteness and severity; trace its progress through every channel; bring to the light of open day the secret mischiefs which it has been working; let the lineaments of immorality, with which you aver it to be so odiously disfigured, be exhibited in their boldest relief; in short, give a *true* picture as highly wrought as you please, and then place it by the side of a similar sketch of Presbyterianism, and I venture to affirm, that no unitarian will desire to have his cause presented in a more favourable light, or wish the public to possess a better confutation of your charges.

After thus declining to go into the examination, which was so essential to the merits of the cause, you return again to the *tendency of principles*, and appeal to the records of past events for proofs of the good effects of calvinism. You express yourself in the following interrogations. "Now I appeal to all impartial readers, who have the least knowledge of ecclesiastical history, whether those who have embraced the general system of christian doctrine, designated by the name of Calvinism, have not been in all ages distinguished as '*the stricter sort*' of professing christians? Have they not always been reproached by the laxer classes as 'austere,' 'puritanical,' and enemies of even many 'innocent indulgences?'" An appeal so formal and confident cannot be met with more fairness I presume, than by bringing distinctly before us some of the prominent particulars to which it refers. As my limits are narrow, a very small number must suffice, but they shall be such as have marked the strong features of calvinism.

Let us begin with the founder of this system. What does history report respecting the influence of his prin-

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ciples on his own mind, temper, and character? Has there ever been a more violent or unrighteous persecutor, than Calvin? What page of history is stained with darker blots, than those which narrate some of the events of his life? Look at his violent abuse and cruel persecutions of his friend Castalio, a man of great learning, moderation, and piety, against whom he uttered the grossest language, and procured a decree of banishment for no other reason, than that he had the independence to assert and maintain opinions, which differed from his own. The unfortunate, though less worthy, Bolsec shared a similar fate. Every one, indeed, who presumed to doubt his infallibility, whether friend or foe, was made to feel the effects of his turbulent passions. But the darkest and deepest stigma on his character, was his treatment of Servetus, and it is one, which his ardent admirers have laboured with total want of success to remove, or even to diminish. Servetus had for many years been his confidential friend and correspondent. He could not subscribe the creed of Calvin, and as Calvin could not convince him by argument and persuasion, he resorted to stronger means. He accused him of heresy, procured his imprisonment, commenced against him a criminal process, and was thus the original and chief cause of his sentence of death, and his murder at the stake. He afterwards declared his warmest approbation of this event in letters to his friends, and expressed himself in the most intemperate language. Even in his commentaries on the Bible, he calls Servetus a "profligate fellow, a knave, and an obscene dog."*

* The rage of Calvin seems first to have been excited on account of certain questions in theology, which Servetus had proposed to him, but which Calvin did not answer to his satisfaction. Calvin could not bear opposition, and Servetus was not to be convinced without a rea-

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Such was the character of him, who first matured and embodied the doctrines, which now go under his name. Do these historical facts argue much in favour of the moral tendency of the principles you defend? Calvin was the more inexcusable, as he had himself deserted the church of Rome, and professed to be an advocate for free inquiry. It is certainly unfortunate for your appeal to history, that few names have descended to posterity, bearing feebler testimony of the persons to whom they belonged having been under the purifying influence of religious principles, than that of Calvin.

The commotions in Holland, which preceded and followed the Synod of Dort, and which brought the virtuous and inflexible patriot, Oldenbarneveldt, to the block, and consigned the illustrious Grotius to perpetual imprisonment, were excited by the Calvinists. The spirit of intolerance, which arose to so fervent a heat in Calvin, raged at this period with scarcely less violence in his followers. The Arminians had struck out of their creed the doctrine of absolute decrees, because they could neither find it in the Scriptures, nor believe it. This was the

son. One of the unworthy acts of Calvin in procuring his condemnation, was the producing of a manuscript at his trial, which Servetus had sent to him long before for his examination and judgment, but which had never been printed.

To show the spirit with which he meditated and prosecuted this business, it is enough to quote what he said in a letter, which Bolsec and Grotius saw in the original, "that if this *heretic* should fall into his hands, he would order it so, that it should cost him his life." And after the unholy act was done, he boasted of "having exterminated Michael Servetus the Spaniard."

The authority for these facts, and others equally disgraceful, may be seen in a very circumstantial and interesting account of the life, writings, and death of Servetus, contained in the *Monthly Repository*, vol. i. and v. See also the *Cambridge General Repository*, vol. iii.; *Wright's History of Persecutions*, p. 345; *Mosheim*, vol. iv. p. 433, 488.

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offence that kindled a flame of persecution in the Calvinists, which lasted for years, drove many of the Arminians into exile, immured others in prisons, silenced their preachers, suppressed their religious assemblies, and inflicted universally every species of severity. Even at the Synod of Dort, which was pretended to be summoned for the purpose of a mutual conference, the Arminians were treated as heretics, and rudely denied the privilege of explaining and defending their sentiments. They were dealt with as criminals, and condemned as such.

The history of Holland during these disastrous times affords the most striking illustration of the influence of calvinistic principles, when allowed to act without opposition. The Calvinists were the stronger party; they professed to act wholly from motives of religion; and all the enormities practised on their opponents are justly ascribed to this source.*

It will not be easy, perhaps, to trace the effects of calvinism with much precision in England. Civil and religious causes have been so much blended in that country since the origin of calvinism, as to render it a difficult task to distinguish between them. What with the Puritans, the favourers of the English Prelacy, and of Papacy, during the high commotions of church and state, it is impossible to tell how much should be put to the account of selfishness, party zeal, bigotry, the tendency of bad principles, or of a correct faith, and genuine piety. One thing, however, amidst this chaos of uncertainty, stands forth prominent and indisputa-

* See *Mosheim's Church History*, vol. v. chap. 3. *North American Review*, vol. vi. p. 185. Oldenbarneveldt opposed the convocation of the Synod of Dort, and maintained, that the States-General had no authority on matters of religion. See *Maclaine's Note in Moshiem's History*, vol. v. p. 451.

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ble. When the calvinists had dominion, they showed a spirit of intolerance not a whit inferior to that of their Genevan master, or their brethren at Dort. Witness the ordinance of the Presbyterian parliament against heresy, in which it was decreed, that any one, who should be guilty of certain *opinions*, which were defined and declared to be heretical, "*should suffer the pains of death, as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy.*"* This was walking in the precise steps of Calvin. It is a case of importance, because it discovers the feelings of the most intelligent and influential men among the calvinists, and is thus an accurate index to the impressions and inclinations of the less informed multitude.

It is hardly necessary to call your mind to the first settlers of New-England. The odious effects of their intolerance and persecutions are not to be forgotten by any one, who has looked at the history of those times. For the honour of religion, and even of humanity, we should be willing to have them forgotten. But when appealing to history for the influence of certain doctrines, justice and truth demand a fair report. The laws made against the heresies of Quakers by the early colonists were, if possible, more unhuman than those of

* This act was passed May 2, 1648. Neal says, "This was one of the most shocking laws I have met with, and shows that the governing Presbyterians of these times would have made a terrible use of their power, if it had been supported by the sword of the civil magistrate." *Neal's History*, vol. iii. p. 497. Among the heresies which were to be punished with death, was the denying, "That Christ is not God equal with the Father,—or that the Godhead and Manhood are distinct natures." Imprisonment was threatened to such as maintained, "That man by nature hath free will to turn to God,—that the soul of man sleeps, when the body is dead,—that man is bound to believe no more than by his reason he can comprehend." *Ibid.*

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the Presbyterian parliament. They were rigorously put in execution, and in several instances the punishment of death was actually inflicted.* The first Baptists, who came into the country, were also treated with great severity, and punished in various ways for their heresy. Now the persons, who ran into these excesses, were calvinists of "the stricter sort," who embraced the dogmas of this faith in their fullest extent, and even while committing these outrages against the laws of our common nature, imagined themselves acting under the imperious guidance of their religious principles.

Such is the influence of calvinism as testified by history. How far your appeal proves favourable to your position, let the impartial decide. The particulars here selected are leading features in the history of Calvinism; and it is remarkable, that where the principles of this faith have been most prevalent, and met with least opposition, their evil effects have been most severely felt. In Geneva, where nearly all were calvinists, Castalio, Bolsec, and others were banished, and Servetus was murdered; in Holland, where opposition was stronger, and the influence of milder principles had some weight, the tide of persecution ran with less violence; in England, for similar reasons, its violence was still less, not theoretically, but practically, not in default of inclination, but of power, and of public countenance; in New England, the scenes of Geneva were again acted over,

* "The Quakers," says Belknap, "were at first banished, but this proving insufficient, a succession of sanguinary laws was enacted against them, of which imprisonment, whipping, cutting off the ears, boring the tongue with a hot iron, and banishment on pain of death, were the terrible sanctions." *History of New Hampshire*, vol i. p. 90. For some curious remarks on this subject, and a further confirmation of what is here said, See *Mather's Magnalia Christi*, Book vii. c. 4.

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because all were calvinists, and the natural asperity of their sentiments was not softened by intercourse with others, whose views were more rational and temperate.

I intended to examine your appeal to history in another light, but this letter has already extended so far as to leave me but little room. It would be to the purpose to make some inquiries into the historical grounds on which you boast of the epithets, *strict*, *austere*, and *puritannical*, as applied to calvinists. What has gained them the honour of having the exclusive appropriation of these epithets? I believe no calvinist has before thought of claiming them as tokens of the religious purity of his sect. Is it true, that they have ever been employed to denote the sincere religion of the heart? To call a man *austere* and *puritanical*, is at once to insinuate, that you have suspicions of his honest professions and latent piety. If I am not greatly mistaken, this is the universal sense of mankind; and if the inquiry were pursued, I have no doubt that the origin of these epithets would be found in the features of calvinism just portrayed. I would only infer, that the use of these words adds no strength, but rather weakness, to your argument for the moral tendency of calvinism.

I would make the same inference on another consideration. There has been no sect, probably, whom the world would more readily agree in calling *austere*, *puritanical*, and *of the stricter sort*, than the Pharisees of old, and yet our Saviour gives us no flattering picture of their morals or piety. Why may not the words have the same meaning, when applied to a modern sect, whether composed of calvinists, or those of any other faith? Do you reply, that the Pharisees were hypocrites and pretenders, thinking more of outward appearances, than of inward purity? That is true, and it is the very rea-

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son why we call them austere and puritanical. No one would apply these epithets to the apostles. But why not, except that their sincerity and piety were never doubted? If it had always been thus with all christians, if there never had been any one, *qui aliud est, et aliud simulat*, the use of these words, which you think an indication of the superior morals of calvinists, would never have been known.

I shall next examine your notion of Christian Charity, as stated under the fourth head of your Reply.

Yours,

A UNITARIAN OF BALTIMORE.

Christian Register.

A THEOLOGICAL Paper has lately been commenced in Boston under the title of the CHRISTIAN REGISTER, and is published weekly. The following is an extract from the Editor's notice to the public, in the first number.

"The great object of the Christian Register will be to inculcate the principles of a rational faith, and to promote the practice of genuine piety. To accomplish this purpose, it will aim to excite a spirit of free and independent religious inquiry, and to assist in ascertaining and bringing into use, the true principles of interpreting the Scriptures. It will urge the importance and duty of subjecting our faith to the test of scripture and enlightened reason, and of rejecting from our creed, not only what is *contrary* to the general language of the Scriptures, but every thing that is not plainly and explicitly taught there.

"It will also enforce the duty of a serious and practical regard to the moral precepts of Christianity, by showing that the final favour of God toward us is to depend not so much upon what has been done *to* us, or *for* us by another, as upon the temper of mind we have ourselves cherished, and the course of moral conduct we have pursued. And it will earnestly recommend to all, the cultivation of the mild

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and amiable spirit of the gospel toward those who differ from them, from the belief that genuine piety is not confined to any sect, but exists in a greater or less degree amongst all, and that he is the *best* Christian, not whose speculations are in nearest accordance with the faith of the majority, but whose life and temper are most perfectly and habitually under the influence of the precepts and spirit of the Gospel."

This will give our readers a general view of the work, and lead them to discover that its objects are important and interesting. The few numbers, which have already appeared, answer fully the promises of the Editor. The theological department occupies much the largest portion, and is marked as we think with just views of religion, and a spirit of candour and liberal inquiry. There is, besides, a department for articles of intelligence, and other topics of general interest. Whoever would gain religious instruction in a familiar and agreeable way, or wishes to become acquainted with the sentiments of unitarians, and the grounds of their faith, from explanations brief, accurate, and perspicuous, will find this paper well adapted to his purpose.

On Luke i. 16, 17.

"And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he [John] shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias."

Some have supposed this text to prove the deity of Christ. As it is here said, that John should go before God, and as he actually went before Christ, it is inferred that Christ was God. But this is a forced interpretation, by no means required by the context, nor borne out by parallel examples. The mistake arises from giving a wrong sense to the words "go before." The meaning is, that John should go, or proceed, *in the*

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sight of God. As in the sixth verse of the same chapter, where it is said. "They were both righteous before God," that is, *in the sight* of God. And also in Luke xii. 6, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God," or *in the sight* of God. In each of these passages the same words are used in the original; as also in Luke i. 15. where they are translated in this sense; "And he shall be great *in the sight* of the Lord."*

Theological School at Harvard University.

THE annual visitation and examination of this school, took place July 15th, in the presence of the patrons and friends of the Institution, who were highly gratified by the proofs of diligence and fidelity in the use of their privileges exhibited by the theological students, and the promise of future usefulness in the church. During the past year thirty-five persons, exclusive of permanent officers of the College, have resided at the university as candidates for the ministry, or members of the Theological Seminary. [Christian Disciple.

Boston Publishing Fund Society.

A SOCIETY has lately been instituted in Boston for publishing and circulating books and tracts "adapted to improve the public mind in religion and morality."

* The original—προελευσεται ενωπιον αυτου—is rendered by Wakefield, "He will lead the way in the sight of God;" and by Archbishop Newcome it is paraphrased as follows, "He shall go before Christ in the sight of the Lord God." See *Newcome's New Testament*, vol. i. p. 235.

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The scheme proposed is on a broad foundation, and promises to be extensively useful. The general concerns of the Society are managed by trustees, who are chosen annually, and the business of selecting and publishing is submitted to a committee appointed for the purpose. The officers for the present year are George Bond, *Treasurer;* John S. Foster, *Secretary;* Rev. J. Tuckerman, Rev. J. G. Palfrey, and George Ticknor, *Publishing Committee.*

Original Hymn from Sewall's Collection.

Trust in the Divine Goodness.

My God, I thank thee! may no thought
E'er deem thy chastisements severe;
But may this heart, by sorrow taught,
Calm each wild wish, each idle fear.

Thy mercy bids all nature bloom;
The sun shines bright, and man is gay;
Thine equal mercy spreads the gloom,
That darkens o'er his little day.

Full many a throb of grief and pain
Thy frail and erring child must know;
But not one prayer is breathed in vain,
Nor does one tear unheeded flow.

Thy various messengers employ;
Thy purposes of love fulfil;
And mid the wreck of human joy
May kneeling faith adore thy will.

The Articles of Association of the *Charleston Unitarian Society for the Distribution of Books,* will appear in the next number.

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N. B. The profits arising from the sale of this Discourse will be appropriated to the benefit of the widow and children of the deceased.

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PROSPECTUS.

The principal object proposed in the present work, is to set forth the doctrines, and inculcate the truths of the christian religion, as they are usually understood by Unitarians. It is published monthly, in numbers, each number containing not less than thirty-six pages.

The annual price to subscribers is one *dollar and fifty cents*, payable on the first of May.

Any person becoming responsible for six subscribers, is entitled to one copy gratis. Agents to correspond with the Secretary of the Baltimore Unitarian Book Society.

CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

The Christian Register is a theological paper lately established in Boston. It is designed to exhibit the Unitarian views of christianity, to excite a spirit of free and independent religious inquiry, to inculcate the principles of a rational faith, and to promote the practice of genuine piety.

It is printed weekly in the form of a newspaper. The annual subscription is *two dollars and fifty cents*, if paid in advance, and *three dollars*, if paid after six months.

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THE

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CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

No. XI.] NOVEMBER, 1821. [Vol. II.

Supposed Scripture Proofs of the Trinity.

A WRITER in a late number of the Presbyterian Magazine, speaking of the doctrine of the Trinity, has thus expressed himself; "It is taught by the Saviour and his apostles in the clearest manner, and in the most express terms, that language can supply."

If this position can be maintained, it necessarily follows, that to deny the doctrine of the trinity is to reject some of the clearest and most express declarations of our Lord and his apostles, and that it would require a large portion of charity to exculpate antitrinitarians from the suspicion of wilfully rejecting an undoubted doctrine of holy scripture. Perhaps it is not therefore wonderful, if those who "think thus of the trinity" should be reluctant to acknowledge the deniers of it as christian brethren, and if they should regard their situation as extremely dangerous, since it cannot be a light matter to speak and act in opposition to the clearest evidence, and to refuse to embrace the faith taught in the New Testament "in the most express terms, that language can supply."

Such conduct would manifest great perverseness and deep rooted depravity, with which we should expect to meet only among the dregs and refuse of mankind. It

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is inconsistent with every great and noble quality; particularly with integrity and the love of truth. Persons, who should evince such a total destitution of all sound and good principles in matters relating to religion, would justly forfeit every claim to confidence and respect in the common concerns of life. The only plea, that could be urged in their favour, would be, that they laboured under an unhappy defect of comprehension; but to render this plea a valid one, the defect must be so great as to incapacitate them for perceiving what was stated in the clearest manner, and in terms the most direct. Now, I ask, would such persons be fit to manage the most ordinary concerns of life, or be able to take any part in a connected and rational conversation? Yet we do not find, that those who disbelieve the trinity, are either abandoned characters, or in a state approaching to idiotism.

Suspicion therefore arises, that the language quoted in reference to the trinity may be too strong, and that it cannot stand the test of an accurate examination. Every serious believer in the christian religion would readily admit the doctrine of the trinity, or any other doctrine, on being satisfied that it was taught by our Lord and his apostles; and if *they* have taught the doctrine of the trinity, "in the clearest manner, and in the most express terms that language can supply," nothing can be easier than to produce such passages. Let them be produced, and conviction must inevitably take place in every ingenuous mind; there can be no room for doubt or hesitation. I therefore call on believers in the trinity, and more especially on such as are willing to hazard assertions like the one above quoted, to favour the public with the texts, which teach that doctrine in the most clear and explicit manner.

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Is it taught by our Saviour and his apostles, "in the clearest manner, and in the most express terms that language can supply," that "there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory?" If no single text contains thus much, let two, three, or a greater number be produced, in which the different members of this proposition are distinctly contained. The question at issue is not whether the doctrine is supposed to be taught in the Scriptures. That this is the prevailing opinion among christian professors at the present day, is a well known fact; but an *opinion*, however generally received, or however long it has prevailed, is not scripture authority.* It is matter of equal notoriety, that a few texts have been collected, which, taken in the aggregate, have been *supposed* to authorise the conclusion expressed in the language just quoted from the Presbyterian Catechism; although, when these texts are separately examined, it instantly appears, that not one of them contains the doctrine, which is said to be so clearly taught in scripture.—It rests, therefore, on the assumption of those who have imagined, that it was fairly *deducible* from such passages when compared with each other. But, is this *evidence?* Would such a species of proof be regarded as the clearest and most express in any matter involving life, character, liberty, or property? Rather, would it not be inadmissible; or only admissible after satisfactory proof had been received, that nothing better could be obtained?

To save time, I will only advert to the baptismal commission, Matt. xxviii. 19. "Go ye therefore and teach

* Non theologia vera est theologia, quia constanter retinetur, aut diu durat; millerioria theologia potest esse omnium pessima.

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all nations, baptizing them in (εἰς *into*) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is the passage, which is principally relied on to prove the doctrine of the trinity. But it is perfectly silent as to the *Deity* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The preceding verse, with which it is evidently connected, contains a declaration by our Lord expressive of his inferiority and dependence, and which is assigned as the reason why he commissioned his apostles to preach, and to baptize all nations. To infer a trinity on account of the manner in which baptism was here directed to be administered, is not to prove any thing. It simply declares the opinion held by the party making such an inference. By means of the same species of logic, a Jew might, with equal propriety and success, prove the deity of Moses; for we read that the Israelites "were all baptized unto (εἰς *into*) Moses in the cloud and in the sea." I forbear to enlarge, because this text has been already considered in the Miscellany.

It is not a little wonderful, that those, who assert the doctrine of the trinity to be a scripture doctrine, do not appear to have been able to give their sentiments respecting it in the words of scripture. Were such a call to be made on Unitarians, they could be at no loss to answer it. Out of a multitude of texts, which contain their alleged heretical opinions, they would only find it necessary to select such as convey their sentiments to their brethren in the most concise and distinct manner. I will mention two, which would be amply sufficient. "To us there is but one God, even the Father,—there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Let believers in the trinity produce passages equally explicit, then they can talk with a little more propriety of the express terms of scripture in their favour.

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It is a curious fact, that the definition given of the trinity in the Shorter Catechism, although taught to children and catechumens, and represented in common with the rest of that Catechism and the Confession of Faith, as a summary of divine truth, does not accurately exhibit the belief of not a few ministers belonging to the Presbyterian church? If the doctrine of the trinity be clearly and expressly taught in scripture, it seems wonderful, that the united wisdom of a large body of ministers has neither enabled them to exhibit it in the language of scripture, nor in language, which they are prepared to defend, or disposed fully to adopt. I have never yet met with a trinitarian divine, who did not admit, that to assert that there are three *persons* in the Godhead would be incorrect, unless, at the same time, it were perfectly understood, that the word *person* was not to be taken in its usual and popular sense, but only as denoting a distinction. That is, there are three distinctions in the Godhead; at the same time it is maintained, that to each of these distinctions the personal pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, may be applied; that is, as I understand the matter, these distinctions are personified.

But is this the great doctrine of the trinity, on which so much stress has been laid by polemics, and which is said to be so clearly taught in scripture? Why then is it so ambiguously taught in an authorized and popular catechism, and in the public standards of churches claiming to be sound in the faith? Why are children and young persons directed to repeat words, which are not calculated to convey a correct impression to their minds of a doctrine said to lie at the foundation of christian truth, and the right apprehension of which is regarded as essential to an acceptance with God? Why so much proscription and denunciation, so many harsh speeches,

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and such professions of painful solicitude? Is the belief in three distinctions, supposed to exist in regard to the Supreme Being, an essential prerequisite to the supreme love of God, and the love of our neighbour as ourselves? Does it furnish a better or surer test of discipleship, or of loving one another agreeably to the spirit of our Lord's new commandment, and the model exhibited by his illustrious example? Many more reflections offer themselves, but I leave it to every intelligent, serious, and inquiring reader to supply them.

In the mean time, if this doctrine be so exceedingly plain in the Scriptures, it is not a little remarkable, that many of the most learned trinitarians have laboured so hard to find it there, and that many others have given up the search in despair, and acknowledged their favourite doctrine to be supported by no other authority, than that of the church. I will state a few facts relating to this subject, beginning with the Fathers.

Theophilus, the good bishop of Antioch, and the first who used the word *trinity* to denote the three persons in the Godhead, found this doctrine in the three days, which preceded the creation of the sun and moon. These three days, he observes, "are types of the trinity, of God, his logos, and his wisdom."

It was a device as early as Tertullian to find the trinity in the language employed respecting the creation of man. "Let *us* make man in our image," implies, it was said, a plurality of persons. These persons, it was inferred, must be three in number, though we are not told why three should be supposed in preference to two, or four, or ten. Austin refined upon this discovery, and ascertained, that notwithstanding there are *three* persons, they are nevertheless *one*. Were it not so,

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he observes, it would have been, "Let us make man in our *images*, and not in our *image*."* Basil was pleased with Austin's improvement. Glycas, the annalist, was still more fortunate, and went so far as to discover the particular office, which each person of the trinity performed in the creation of man. "Who said," he asks, "Let us make man? The Father. Who took the dust of the ground for that purpose? The Son. And who breathed into him the breath of life. The Holy Spirit."

Austin found another proof of the trinity in the account of the creation. This was completed in six days, and six is *twice three*. Hence, according to Austin's logic, there are three persons in the trinity.

Cyril of Alexandria found a proof of the trinity in the dimensions of Noah's ark, which he sagaciously remarks was *three* hundred cubits long, and *thirty* high.†

Novatian supposed it was the Son, and not God the Father, who came down upon the tower of Babel, for as the Almighty fills all space, he cannot be said either to descend or ascend.

According to Austin, the three angels, who appeared to Abraham, were the three persons of the trinity; and the two who went to Sodom, he says, were the Son and Spirit, because they were *sent*, and the Father is never represented as being sent. This latter was also the opinion of Cyril and Athanasius. Glycas tells us, that it was the trinity, who entered the tent of Abraham, and

* Non diceretur ad imaginem nostrum, sed ad imagines nostras.

† Aspice ergo quæso, quemadmodum in trecentis cubitis, quod arcæ longitudinem esse assignavimus perfectio sanctæ trinitatis consecratur. *Opera* Vol. i. p. 17. He enlarges upon this thought, and shows how the several dimensions of the ark represent the three hypostases [tres hypostases] of the trinity.

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cheerfully partook of the things which were provided for them.*

Moses said to the people, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." In this text, which was intended as an express declaration of the unity of God, Austin discovered the trinity, because the name of the Lord is *three* times repeated. *Audi Israel Deus, Deus tuus, Deus unus est.*

Such are the proofs of the trinity adduced by the Fathers from the Pentateuch. When you come to the Psalms and prophetical books, they are more numerous, and if possible more strange. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me." Psalms, li. 10, 11. In this text, says Origen, the Father is the principal spirit, the *right spirit* is the Son, and these two, with the Holy Spirit last mentioned, make the three persons of the trinity.—"A threefold cord," saith the Preacher, "is not quickly broken." Eccl. iv. 12. Paulinus considers this a proof of the trinity.—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." According to Ambrose, and to other trinitarians down to the famous Jones of Nayland, the word *holy* repeated *three times* here denotes the three persons in the trinity.

* These opinions were not suffered to go to rest with the Fathers. After mentioning the change of Abraham's name, Lightfoot writes thus. "Some three months after this, the *three persons in the Trinity dine with Abraham*, and foretell the birth of Isaac again. The Son and Holy Ghost go down to Sodom; but the first person in the Trinity stayeth with Abraham, and condescendeth to his prayer, as long as he asketh." *Lightfoot's Works*, 1684, vol. i. p. 19. Jeremy Taylor observes, however, that "It may be the three angels, that came to Abraham, will signify no more than the two that came to Lot, or the single one to Manoah, or St. John." *Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 243.

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Cyprian perceived emblems of the trinity in the *three* hours of prayer observed by Daniel in his captivity, and in his *three* friends, who were rescued from the fiery furnace by the hand of God.

Austin has a short argument to prove, that Christ was more than human. No man, says he, was ever equal to Solomon, and yet Christ says of himself, "Behold a greater than Solomon is here."—The text, *I and my Father are one*, was first used by the Sabellians against the trinitarians. But it was afterwards turned to another purpose, and became at length one of the most favourite arguments for the proper divinity of Christ. Origen interprets it as implying, that the Father and Son are two hypostases, and that they are one only in consent, harmony, and union of will.* Ambrose, in addition to this, discovered, that Christ mentioned his own name first, "lest it should be imagined, that he was inferior to the Father, whereas it could not be supposed, that the Father was inferior to the Son."

The text, *My Father is greater than I*, Basil says is a proof, that the Father and Son are of the same nature, "because things of a different nature are not so compared."

The Apostle says of God, that *of him, and through him, and to him are all things*, which Gregory tells us relates to the trinity.

Chrysostom proves Christ to be equal with the Father from the text, *we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" Did a deputy," he asks, "ever presume to say, I and my king give orders?" After this, no one can be surprised at the manner in which

* Εν δε τη ομονοια, και τη συμφωνια, και τη ταυτοτητι του βουληματος.

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Isidore discovered the mystery of the hypostatica union. In contemplating his pen he observed, that the point was divided into two parts, but that these were united in the body; and thus, says one, "he found a knack in it, and thought it was a mystery." Jeremy Taylor speaks of a person, who perceived a symbol of the trinity in the *three measures of meal* mentioned in the gospel.

I have thus given a very few specimens of the manner in which the ancient Fathers appealed to the Scriptures in proof of the trinity. Many others of a similar nature might be quoted. Any one, who would pursue the subject, may find it largely treated in the second volume of Priestley's History of Early Opinions, to which I have been indebted for several of the above examples. In passing I will ask one question. If the trinity shines out so brilliantly in every part of the Scriptures, how has it come to pass, that these learned divines stumbled so much in the dark? If the words of scripture are so plain, how does it happen, that these men have struggled so hard to bring out of the abyss of obscurity, types, figures, symbols, images, shadows, any thing but the reality; and in doing which, they have shown any thing rather than a vestige of good sense, or a proof of a sane mind? They have most abundantly verified the maxim, *Quærunt quod nusquam est, inveniunt tamen.* If they had believed the trinity to be taught in the express language of scripture, it is marvellous indeed, that they should resort to such a burlesque upon all serious interpretation and argument.

Is it not certain, moreover, that the doctrine of the trinity was not pretended by many learned men, for several ages of the church, to be proved from the Scriptures?

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It is a well attested fact in ecclesiastical history, that the Holy Spirit was not sanctioned as a person of the trinity, by the consent of any regular ecclesiastical body, till nearly four hundred years after Christ. The first controversies were about the divinity and consubstantiality of Christ. The Holy Spirit was seldom introduced. But is it probable, that this part of the subject would thus have been passed over, if the doctrine of the trinity, in the shape which it has since assumed had then been embraced. The Apostle's Creed says nothing of a trinity, although this was made at a very early period, when the true faith would be as likely to be known, as at any time afterwards. Mosheim says it was not till the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, that "a hundred and fifty bishops gave the finishing touch to what the Council of Nice had left imperfect, and fixed, in a full and determinate manner, the doctrine of three persons in one God."* Whence was it, that this was not settled long before, without the aid of a hundred and fifty bishops, by consulting the Bible, if this book contains the doctrine in such express terms, as have been imagined? Yet in all these councils, where the trinity was decreed, we hear nothing of the authority of the Bible, but of the Bishops.

Can any evidence be brought, that the Council of Nice used scripture arguments to confute the Arians? Is not the contrary notorious? This point has been already discussed in the Miscellany, [No. VIII, p. 329.] Se-

* *Mosheim's Church History*, vol i. p. 426. Some accounts say, that this point was determined a short time before, by a synod of Bishops at Alexandria with Athanasius at their head. Of the members of this synod, Sozomen says, Spiritum Sanctum Patri et Filio consubstantialem confitentur, et trinitatem nominant. *Sozomen Hist. Eccl.* lib. v. chap. 11.

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veral of the most learned writers among the Catholics were quoted to show, that it was for a long time, if it be not at present, the understanding of that church, that the doctrine of the trinity was not considered a doctrine of the Bible, but of tradition. Petavius attests, that "the mystery of the trinity was not made known and confirmed till after the contest between the Arians, and the catholics." Bellarmine, one of the greatest ornaments of the church, certifies the same thing; and so do several other writers, as may be seen by consulting the article referred to above. At the commencement of the Reformation, such seems to have been the general belief of the catholic church. Some of the more distinguished Lutherans confessed they could find nothing in favour of a trinity in the Old Testament.

The early Arminians did not profess to find the trinity in the plain language of scripture. Lamy tells us, that Episcopius, whom he designates as the "chief pillar of the Arminian party," did not consider a belief in the trinity and incarnation necessary to salvation, "because, according to him, they are *not to be found in the scripture in a clear and plain manner*, no more than other opinions, which divide christians."* These sentiments are contained in his Theological Institutes, which were highly commended by Grotius, and even father Mabillon, and defended by Le Clerc against Jurieu and Bossuet. But what is quite as strong evidence in this case as can be desired, is, that the Arminians never imposed the trinity as a necessary article of faith for christian communion. It is not contained in Limborch's seven

* *Lamy's History of Socinianism*, chap. 32. I should be unwilling always to vouch for the fidelity of Monsieur Lamy. He evidently writes in ill humour, and even with bitterness, against the Socinians, and with no good will to the Remonstrants.

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rules of Fundamentals; and Le Clerc says expressly, that "they proffer communion to all, who receive the sacred Scriptures, as the only rule of their faith and conduct, and who are neither idolaters nor persecutors."* It is unnecessary to mention Vorstius, the successor of Arminius in the divinity chair at Leyden, because he was openly charged with denying the trinity; and one of the accusations brought against him by the pious Synod of Dort, at the time of his excommunication, was, that he "made bold with such doctrines as concern the trinity of persons in the Godhead, and the hypostatical union." *See Judgments of the Synod holden at Dort*, p. 102. It was on this ground, that the royal theologue, king James, caused his book *De Deo* to be publicly burnt in London, and induced the States of Holland to banish its author from his native country. In short, I am convinced no proof can be advanced, that the early writers among the Arminians, such as Grotius, Episcopius, Vorstius, and Le Clerc, considered the doctrine of the trinity as plainly taught in the Scriptures, or as a necessary article of christian faith.

In regard to later writers, both Arminian and Calvinistic, there may be less certainty. Of professions and confident assertions there is no end. We are told daily from pulpits, and in books, that the trinity is a most prominent doctrine of scripture. When proof is demanded, we are put off with creeds, with definitions,

* Ils offrent la communion a toux ceux, qui recoivent l'ecriture saiute comme la seule regle de la foi et des mœurs, et qui ne sont ni idolatres ni persecuteurs. *Biblioth. Ancien. et Mod.* Tom xxv. p. 110. Nearly the same sentiments are expressed in the Dedication of his Translation of Hammond's Paraphrase and Commentary, p. 3. Edit. Secund. 1714.

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which have no resemblance to any thing that is obvious in scripture, and with language totally different from any used by the sacred penmen. If their language be so plain, how is it, that no two trinitarians interpret it alike? How is it, that there have been modal, scholastic, indwelling, and tripersonal trinitarians, even in the bosom of the Presbyterian church itself? When any connected series of words out of the Bible can be so put together, as to make an intelligible definition of the trinity, some proof will be given of its being plainly taught. This has never yet been done.

Examine every creed in Christendom, and in no instance will you discover the trinity to be defined in scripture language. And I am much mistaken if there be a treatise extant, professedly written in favour of the trinity, in which the force of argument is rested at all on the plain and express language of the Bible. Every thing is proved by *inference*. We are told, that we ought to consider Christ the same as the Father, not because he is ever called the Father, but because such powers and actions are attributed to him, as could only be attributed to the Father. We are told, also, that the Holy Spirit is the same as the Father and the Son, not because it is any where said in the Bible to be either the Father or Son, but because it is described with such properties, as it could not possess, unless it were the Father and the Son. We are told, that there are three persons in the trinity, not because there is any language the least resembling this in the Bible, but because having *inferred* that the Father is a person, and the Son a person, and the Spirit a person, we are compelled to *infer*, that these three persons make but one person; till, finally, the whole turns out to be a doctrine of *inferences*. And trace the progress of trinitarian arguments from the

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Scriptures through whatever channels you please, they will all meet in this point at last. The unity of God is plainly expressed. Every other part of the trinity is *inferred*. This the good bishop Smalridge was fain to confess, when he said, "The trinity is not in so many words taught us in the Holy Scriptures—yet it may easily, regularly, and undeniably be *inferred* from Scripture."* As all trinitarians in reality go upon this ground, I ask nothing more, than that they should candidly acknowledge it, and not lead away such as are less informed by assertions, which never have been, and never can be supported. I am willing they should make inferences, if they will allow me the same privilege; premising, however, that when I exercise this privilege, some respect shall be paid to my sincerity, understanding, and judgment, and that such proofs as I may advance in the exact words of scripture, shall not be set aside by any authority of inferences. I want no other language to express the terms of my faith, than such as the plain words of scripture supply. T.

* Nearly the same thing is said by Bishop Atterbury, who, although he holds the language of scripture to be sufficiently plain, tells us nevertheless, that "It is not pretended this doctrine is *any where, throughout the whole Bible*, expressed with the utmost degree of evidence and clearness, which words are any ways possibly capable of." And to comfort us in our perplexities, he assures us, that "God never designed to give us an account of the mysteries of christianity in expressions every way so bright and clear, as should prevent all possible wrestings and misconstructions. For this had been to do too great force to our assent, which ought to be free and voluntary. This had been to rob us of the rewards due to believing, and to take away the proper test and trial of sincere and ingenuous minds." *Sermons*, Vol. iii. p. 266, 267.

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Orthodox Ordination in Connecticut.

The following account of an Ordination in Connecticut is taken from the work, which we have before mentioned as being edited by twelve clergymen in Philadelphia. It is from the pen of one of the Editors.

"On the 29th of August last, I was present at a council of pastors and delegates, convened for the purpose of installing a minister of the gospel. In the course of the examination of his religious sentiments, he was asked what were his views of the *atonement*. He replied, that he defined the atonement to be, *such an exhibition of the real feelings of God in relation to sin as would cause his hatred of it to be believed, even though he should pardon it*. The *matter* of this atonement he said consisted exclusively in the *sufferings* of Jesus Christ. By these *sufferings* the moral character of the Deity was manifested as wholly opposed to sin; and he would now be accredited in his declarations of his abhorrence of it, even while remitting the sins of all true penitents.

"To this statement a deacon interposed, and asked the candidate if the *active righteousness* of Christ constituted no part of the atonement, and no part of the ground of a sinner's pardon. The candidate distinctly expressed his opinion—that it did not.

"Being invited to sit as a corresponding member of the council, and the question being put to me, if I would propose any interrogatories, I asked the candidate,

"Has the active righteousness of Jesus Christ, which consisted in conformity to the precepts of the moral law, any influence in meriting the justification of believers?

"He answered, 'not in the least.'

"Why then, I resumed, was the obedience of Christ to the precepts of the moral law necessary at all?

"It was answered, his active obedience was necessary, that he might be a suitable person to make atonement by his sufferings; for had he been a sinner, his sufferings would have been but the punishment of his own sins; and so would have furnished no indication of God's displeasure against the sins of others, who should be pardoned.

"I proposed also this question:—*If God is a God of truth, and atonement for sin consists in the mere exhibition of God's real feelings in relation to sin, why might not an atonement for sin have been made by*

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God's DECLARATIONS *of his hatred of it?* Why might not the *mere words* of the *true* God have performed the office of a Saviour?

"The candidate replied, because mere words would not be believed unless they were accompanied by corresponding actions.

"But, might not the *declarations* of the true God, concerning his hatred of sin, verified by the sufferings of devils and damned spirits, have constituted the atonement, and so have performed the office of Christ?

"*Their* sufferings, the candidate conceived, would not be a sufficiently clear and dignified atonement, to have vindicated the Deity in pardoning sin. No exhibition inferior to that made by the sufferings of the Son of God, he thought would sufficiently indicate the divine disposition, so as to render it consistent with the character of Jehovah to pass by the transgressions of men.

"In reply to the question of some one, the candidate said, that he considered *the justification* of a sinner, in the sense of the gospel, as synonymous with *the pardoning* of a sinner.

"These answers appeared to meet with the approbation of the council, and it was therefore resolved, unanimously, by all who had a right to *vote* in the case, to proceed to the installation of the pastor elect."

These proceedings of a clerical council in Connecticut indicate a progress in religious inquiry, which we were not prepared to learn from that quarter; and yet it is no more, perhaps, than we ought to have expected. The domineering spirit of the clergy in that state has already reacted upon themselves, and weakened their former strength, by gaining to the people a Constitution, which has enlarged the bounds of their religious freedom. With this new foundation to stand upon, we have reason to suppose, that one shackle will drop off after another, till the chains of the inquisitorial Consociations will become inefficient, and even the *Saybrook Platform* will want another platform to hold it up. It is impossible, that the spirit, which gives stability to our free political institutions, should tolerate such a hierarchy, as was set up by the "Elders and Messengers of the Churches" assembled at Saybrook in 1708. The only wonder is,

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that it has not declined and crumbled away before. The events of the last five years are such as the spirit of the times demands, and will continue to demand, till the liberty of the gospel, and the rights of conscience are restored.*

The opinion of the candidate for ordination in the present case, which was approved by the members of the council, we do not think entirely comformable to scripture. But it is founded on the basis of common sense, and to say the least is more analogous to the principles of divine truth, as revealed in the Gospel, than it is to the vain imaginations of men on this subject. It is a presage of better things, a glimmering of light forcing its struggling beams through a darkness, which has hitherto seemed impenetrable.

The writer closes his remarks with the following testimony of his apprehensions.

"If in any thing I have misunderstood, or misrepresented, any of my brethren of the council, I shall gladly be corrected, and acknowledge my error; but at present, I must say, the scheme of doctrine which I have here stated, with regret, to be maintained by many, who now

* In the preface to the Saybrook Confession of Faith, the writers recommend to the people, "That you be immoveably and unchangeably agreed in the only efficient, and invariable rule of religion, which is the Holy Scripture, the fixed canon, uncapable of addition and diminution." And immediately after, they add, "For an orthodox christian to resolve his faith into education, instruction, and the persuasion of others is not an higher reason, than a Papist, Mahometan, or Pagan can produce for his religion." *Preface*, p. 8.

After thus recommending the Scriptures as the only rule of faith, and telling the people they are no better than Mahometans and Pagans, if they go to any other source, these very learned and consistent "Elders and Messengers" proceeded immediately to enjoin a series of articles expressing their own views, which were not only to make the groundwork of religious "education, and instruction," but the criterion of christian love and fellowship.

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with myself, worship Christ as God, is well calculated to banish Christ from the church. He need not be truly God to accomplish for us all the atonement, and *all the redemption*, which are therein attributed to him. While I rejoice that my native state has hitherto deposed from the ministry all those who have publicly denied the deity of Jesus Christ, I am constrained to express my fears, from the natural tendency of many doctrines now popular there, that Socinianism and Arianism will greatly prevail there within half a century to come; and that hundreds of the clergy will follow the downward course of Sherman, Abbot, and last of all, the Rev. Dan Huntington."

We should in kindness, perhaps, sympathize with the author in these fears, which bear so heavily upon his mind. But however much our good nature, and the dictates of humanity, might incline us to such a disposition, we cannot resist the imposing sense of duty, which requires us rather to praise God for the good work he has begun, and which we believe he will finish in his own due time. For our own part, we shall think that a happy community, whose members are all like Sherman and Abbot, either in their religious principles, or in the piety and active virtues of their lives. And we will add, moreover, that we shall never look for much of the purity of christian faith, or of the spirit of holiness, in any society, or under any institutions, which shall sanction such unrighteous persecutions as were practised against these gentlemen in Connecticut.*

* The Rev. Mr. Sherman was driven from his ministerial charge over the First Church in Mansfield, Conn. more than fifteen years ago, *on account of his opinions*. He was judged and condemned by an ecclesiastical court, acting on the authority of the Saybrook Platform. Of this court, and of himself, he says; "Were they an ecclesiastical court known in the Scriptures; had they charged me with crime, with a breach of the divine law to mankind; and were there any other kind of iniquity found cleaving to my garment, than that *I cannot see with their eyes, and perceive with their understandings;* I might consider myself affected by their decision. But, as the matter now stands, I feel the authority of the Lord Jesus still resting upon me;

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Bishop Atterbury on Justification by Faith.

THE truth, which hath been explained, suggests to us one argument against their opinion, who hold *justification*, and all the graces of the gospel to be conveyed to us by *faith alone;* in such a sense as excludes any manner of regard to our *works*. For if justification be the putting a man into a state of favour with God by remission of sin, then works of charity which contribute to the remission of our sins, must contribute also to our justification.

This point goes generally for a *speculative* nicety, not worth insisting upon; but surely they, who think it

and shall not desert my ministerial office. They, and others, who shall subscribe to their doings, may treat me according to their pleasure. There is ONE that judgeth between us. To HIM shall the appeal be made." See Sherman's Treatise, entitled, *One God in one Person only; Introduction*, p. 11.

The Rev. Mr. Abbot's case was very similar, but marked by more high handed proceedings, if possible, on the part of his brethren. The whole process may be seen in his own lucid and interesting *Statement, &c.* published in Boston, 1811. "Whatever become of speculations, we believe it will be well for church and state to be always served by men resembling Mr. Abbot in purity of principles, goodness of heart, and integrity of life." *Camb. Gen. Repos.* Vol. i. p. 160.

Of "Dan Huntington," as we know nothing, we have nothing to say. We know, that the Rev. Joseph Huntington, himself a Calvinist, wrote a book called *Calvinism Improved*, in which he attempts to show that the only consistent scheme of Calvinism necessarily implies the doctrine of universal salvation. This position he has established, though with a mode of reasoning, perhaps, which not many would adopt. It is an obvious position, and requires something more powerful to confute it, than the Rev. Dr. Nathan Strong's reply to Huntington's work, in which he attempts to reconcile "eternal misery with the infinite benevolence of God."

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so, have not well considered, what influence it hath experimentally had upon *practice* and a good life, in many of its assertors. Some spiritual libertines, of the *Antinomian* way, have by it undermined the very design of the gospel; and set us free from the necessity of being pious, just, or good, upon any other principle, but that of pure *gratitude* only. And in those who do not rise to these mad heighths, yet the persuasions they have entertained about justifying faith, are observed mightily to lessen their esteem of good works; and from esteeming them less, to come to practise them less, is, God knows, a very easy step, and almost an unavoidable one. Witness the celebrated *Institutions* of a great divine, in which of *faith* much every where, of *charity* little any where is spoken; and we are not, therefore, to wonder, if the rules of charity should in that book be as little observed.

Indeed these very rules of charity, which I would not willingly, while I am mentioning, transgress, induce me to think, that many learned and pious men hold this doctrine of justification by faith alone, in its most rigid sense, without holding or even discerning the ill consequences that attend it. However, since the ill consequences of this doctrine are sufficiently plain, both for reason, and experience, though such men happen not to perceive them, the same rules of charity forbid us, when the subject falls in our way, to be silent concerning them, or suffer men to think, that those, who exclude good works from being any ways instrumental towards justifying a sinner, are guilty only of an innocent mistake, which reacheth no farther than bare speculation.

[Sermon on the Power of Charity.

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Brief History of Unitarianism in England.

[We have lately received a pamphlet written in Latin, entitled, *Unitariorum in Anglia Fidei, Historiæ, Status Præsentis Brevis Expositio.* It was printed in London in May last. We have translated that part relating particularly to the History of Unitarianism in England, which contains much interesting information within a small compass.]

It is not easy to assign the origin, and trace the early history of Unitarianism in England. Its doctrines, however, quickly engaged the attention of the human mind, then newly awakened from its deep and protracted reverie. About the middle of the fifteenth century, Reginald Peacock, Bishop of St. Asaph, and afterwards of Chichester, a zealous advocate for a purer system of faith and morals, appears to have conceived the objections, which have since prevailed, not only to the divinity of Christ, but to the narrative of his miraculous birth recorded in the beginning of Matthew's Gospel. He was deprived of his episcopate; nor did his constancy avail to save him from the ruin which his love of truth had provoked.

Henry the Eighth was the unworthy instrument, and his licentious amours the impure source of the reformation in the English Church. Its separation from the papal see, the work of violence, rather than the result of investigation, was accordingly less complete and effectual, than in other protestant countries. New articles of faith were imposed, and Henry was constituted supreme head of the church; yet there were not a few, who had too proud a sense of their inherent dignity, and were too deeply skilled in sacred literature and ecclesiastical history, to embrace and abandon their opinions at the nod of a capricious tyrant. While the hierarchy, during the

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reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Elizabeth, was assuming its present form, many atoned with their lives for their rejection of the trinity; and the names of many others are transmitted, who, persisting in offering divine honours to the Father only, perished at the stake. The fate of Joan Bocher is remarkable; the warrant of her death was extorted from Edward VI. by archbishop Cranmer, who, for his zeal in promoting the Reformation, was afterwards sacrificed to the fury of the papists. The amiable prince moved to tears is reported to have said to the prelate, "I resign myself wholly to your judgment in this matter; it is for you to justify the deed in the sight of God." This excellent woman had been induced to embrace the doctrine of the simple unity of God by reading the Scriptures, then lately translated into English. The new tenets were disseminated with such rapidity, that a system of persecution was set on foot to suppress them.*

* Strype relates, from Parsons the Jesuit, that "Joan Bocher was at first a great dispenser of Tindal's New Testament, translated by him into English, and printed at Colen; and was a great reader of scripture herself, which book she also dispersed in the court." She was remarkable for her powers of understanding, her active benevolence, and especially for her deeds of kindness to those, whom the religious persecutions of the time had cast into prison.

She was brought before the Commissioners, among whom were Cranmer and Latimer, and condemned to be burnt for her opinions. Her heresy, according to Fox, related to the nature of Christ, and was a species of Arianism. The gentle and amiable king Edward refused at first to sign the warrant for her execution. Burnet writes, [ii. 106] that "the king thought it a piece of cruelty, too like that which they had condemned in papists, to burn any for their consciences." Cranmer argued to him out of the laws of Moses, and produced such reasons, "as did rather silence than satisfy the young king." He, however, set his hand to the warrant, and Joan Bocher was accordingly burnt at Smithfield, May 2, 1550.

It is a curious fact, that John Rogers, who was the first that was

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From 1566 to 1688 the importation of Socinian books was prohibited; and Bartholomew Legate, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of James I. (1611) has borne away the testimony of his implacable adversary to the faultless purity of his life. The piety and fortitude of these holy men in their last moments sunk deeply into the minds of the beholders, so that it was judged expedient to punish the assertors of the divine unity, by leaving them to perish in secret dungeons. The story of their virtues and their sufferings has perished with them; but there is a hand, which has consecrated their memory in immortal characters, and enrolled their names in the book of life.*

The short lived triumph of the Dissenters, after the death of Charles I. was for the most part favourable to religious liberty; in which, however, unitarians were not allowed to participate. John Biddle, a man whose virtues are worthy of all imitation, exposed himself to the

burnt in Queen Mary's reign, being desired to use his interest in obtaining a pardon for Joan Bocher, replied, that "she ought to be put to death." And when it was suggested, that some other kind of death should be chosen, "more agreeable to the gentleness and mercy prescribed in the Gospel", Rogers answered, that "burning alive was no cruel death, but easy enough." See the account, as translated from Fox's Latin work, in *Peirce's Vindication*, p. 34. Also *Monthly Repos.* Vol. vii. p. 862. Ed.

* Bartholomew Legate was accused of being an Arian, and was reputed to be so well versed in the Scriptures, and of so excellent a character, that king James himself undertook to convince him of his error. But the king made no impression upon Legate, nor were the bishops more successful; and he was finally "declared to be a contumacious and obstinate heretic," and was burnt accordingly, refusing at the stake the pardon, which was offered him if he would recant. *Neal*, Vol. ii. 100. *Priestley's History of the Christian Church*, Vol. vi. p. 111. Ed.

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vengeance of the Presbyterian doctors, by assembling a small body of unitarian christians in his house; and after the restoration of Charles II. he died in prison.*

The revolution, which elevated William III. to the English throne, settled the national religion upon a firm basis, and Parliament, by an act of unwonted liberality, extended toleration to all protestant nonconformists, with an express exception of unitarians. A few years after, they were treated with greater rigour; and by the statute of William III. which was repealed at last in 1813, severe penalties, restrictions, and incapacities were imposed upon all, who should deny any one of the persons in the trinity to be God.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, two names are conspicuous among the assertors of the divine unity. The first is that of John Locke, the champion of toleration and civil liberty, who not only developed the nature and operations of the human mind, but recalled reason to its legitimate office, the interpretation of the word of God. His treatise on the "Reasonableness of Christianity," and "Notes on St. Paul's Epistles," have contributed greatly to a sounder exposition of the sacred writings. The name of the other is Thomas Firmin, an opulent citizen of London, to whose munificent benefactions, few charitable institutions of that period refuse their testimony. The unitarian controversy was even then warmly agitated; and this excellent man lent his aid to the printing and distribution of many learned expositions and apologies, which, at the present day,

* Biddle was seized while engaged in divine worship with a small number of his friends. They were all taken before a magistrate, by whom they were sent to prison, where Biddle was treated with so much severity, by the cruel order of the judge, that he died in less than five weeks afterwards. *Toulmin's Life of Biddle*, p. 109. Ed.

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hold a high rank in the collection of Unitarian Tracts. Firmin, and several contemporary unitarians, remained within the pale of the establishment, and although it is not for us to animadvert upon men of acknowledged piety, yet we regret that this circumstance has diminished the weight of their testimony in the cause of truth.*

During the seventeenth century, a large body of the English clergy looked forward with confidence to a reform in the articles of faith. Although they did not secede from the church, yet they refused to sanction, by a renewed subscription, those public tests to which all, when they enter upon office, are required to conform; and thus forfeited all claims to future preferment. They enjoyed their opinions, however, without molestation. But in 1710, William Whiston, a man revered for his piety, learning, and integrity, was, for his vindication of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, deprived of his mathematical professorship in the university of Cambridge, and banished from the college.

Dr. Samuel Clarke's learned treatise on the doctrine of the trinity excited universal attention, and prepared the minds of many for his proposed revision of the for-

* There is a well written biography of Firmin, by an anonymous hand, which was published soon after his death. His whole life was spent in deeds of philanthropy, kindness, and charity. He was an intimate friend of Archbishop Tillotson, who celebrates his great virtues in his sermon on the death of Mr. Gouge. See *Tillotson's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 128. After Tillotson had published his Sermons on the Trinity, he told Mr. Firmin in conversation, that "nobody's false imputations should provoke him to give ill language to persons, who dissented conscientiously, and for weighty reasons; that he knew well this was the case with the Socinians, for whose learning and dexterity he should always have a respect, as well as for their sincerity and exemplariness." *Life of Firmin*, p. 13. Ed.

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mularies of the church. He removed from the Liturgy all those expressions of religious worship, which were not appropriated to the Father; and, thus corrected, the Liturgy has been received, with a few unimportant alterations, by several unitarian societies in England and the United States.*

Among the Unitarians, who flourished at this period, was Sir Isaac Newton, the most illustrious of philosophers. A sincere and humble christian, he devoted himself habitually to the study of the Scriptures. He uniformly professed a belief in the unity of God, and defended it in his valuable dissertation upon the spurious text of the three witnesses in the first epistle of John.

In 1771, a petition was presented to parliament by certain clergymen of the church of England, praying to be relieved from the necessity of subscribing to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and that a belief in the Holy Scriptures might be the only test required. Disappointed in their hopes, many unitarians retired from the church and the universities.† Of these the most dis-

* The only Unitarian Congregation in the United States, where a Liturgy is used, is the Rev. Dr. Freeman's at King's Chapel, Boston. Although this Liturgy is constructed after the general plan of Dr. Clarke's improvements, yet it does not conform to it in all respects. It contains additional prayers from Dr. Paley, Dr. Johnson, Bishop Taylor, Dr. Enfield, and others; and also an Appendix with services taken from the Liverpool and Salisbury Liturgies. The Societies in this country, which are professedly unitarian, it is believed universally adopt the congregational mode of worship. Ed.

† In the English universities, where men are tied down by trinitarian subscriptions, and actuated with the desire of academical favours and ecclesiastical benefits, it is not to be expected, that many should be induced to engage in unitarian disquisitions. In Cambridge, however, several turned their thoughts to these subjects. Among this number were Robert Tyrwhitt, A. M. and John Jebb, M. D. ever memorable for their learning and virtues. The former openly defended the

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tinguished were Wakefield, Jebb, Evanson and Disney, the first of whom for his genius and erudition is celebrated throughout Europe.

The resignation of his benefice by Theophilus Lindsey excited the attention and interest of the public. He relinquished, for the love of truth, all the honours, which were within his reach, exposing himself to poverty, and willing to expose himself, if need had been, to want. Shortly after his retirement, the chapel in Essex Street, London, was erected, and Clarke's improved liturgy, revised by Lindsey, was adopted in the religious services. This, it is believed, was the first edifice in England, consecrated from its foundation to the worship of God the Father. It is, and ever has been, the resort of persons distinguished for wealth, office, rank, and elo-

unity of God in St. Mary's Chapel. He was the first, who proposed a repeal of the statute, by which subscription was enjoined upon all candidates for academical honours; and in this proposal he was seconded by a large portion of the most learned members of the university. Jebb, the intimate friend of Tyrwhitt, honestly resigned his ecclesiastical benefits and prospects, and delivered public lectures on the Greek Testament, until wearied with fruitless disputes, he repaired to London, and applied himself to the practice of physic. United with these in mutual friendship and common pursuits was Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle, and master of Peterhouse. As he was devoted to metaphysical disquisitions, and aided the English Unitarians of that day in their researches, he first received the title of Arian, although, before his death, he deviated from the Arian scheme.

During the year 1787, 8, 9, many followed in their footsteps. In this number were Wm. Frend, A. M. tutor and fellow of Jesus college; John Hammond, A. M. fellow of queen's college; Robert Edward Garnham, A. M. fellow of trinity; George Dyer, A. B. of Emmanuel; with several others. These, both in their writings and public testimony, maintained the unitarian doctrines, and firmly opposing themselves to subscriptions, they either retired from their respective stations in the church and university, or continued to pursue their studies by conforming to such statutes only, as their consciences would allow.

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quence in the senate, and at the bar. Their present pastor is the Rev. Thomas Belsham, formerly professor of theology in a college of calvinistic Dissenters. The writings of this gentleman, whether in defending the credibility of the Gospel and the truths of unitarianism, or in repelling the wanton and insolent attacks made upon his brethren, or in vindicating the honours of the dead against those who seek to tarnish them, equally prove him to be learned, temperate, and acute; while the integrity of his life, the suavity of his manners, and his diffusive benevolence. endear him to the wise and good.

We have thus far traced the progress of the unitarian faith in the English church. Among the Dissenters, who were separated into three sects, and called *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, and *Baptists*, although the progress of unitarianism was very considerable at the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was nevertheless impeded by the pertinacity, with which almost all persons adhere to opinions, which they have embraced after a laborious research; and more especially, if they perceive, that by reason of their opinions, they are excluded from civil offices. Those, who first dissented from the English church, were almost all trinitarians, so that of the two thousand ministers, who, in the reign of Charles II. were ejected from their benefices by the Act of Uniformity, William Manning was the only one that rejected the doctrine of the trinity. The persecution, which his friend, Thomas Emlyn, a clergyman of Dublin, had suffered from his colleagues on account of his opinions respecting this doctrine, and the small treatises by which he had defended his cause, induced many at that time to embrace the faith of the divine unity.*

* Emlyn and Manning were both made to embrace the unitarian faith by reading Dr. Sherlock's Vindication of the Trinity. They

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Freedom of investigating truth commenced with the Presbyterians, among whom were more learned theologians, and a more liberal church discipline, than among the Independents or Baptists. The ecclesiastical synods of the English Presbyterians, however, were never able to accomplish much, and they at length fell into disuse. The unitarian faith was not suspected of being disseminated among them, till the year 1718, when the Rev. James Peirce, minister at Exeter, who prosecuted the undertaking of Locke by a very learned commentary on several of the Epistles of Paul, was compelled, by the intolerance of some of his presbyterian brethren, publicly to declare his dissent from the commonly received doctrine of the trinity. Many imitated his example; and to prevent further discord, a council of dissenting clergymen in London was resolved upon, and more than a hundred were present. Here the attempts of those, who wished to impose subscription to the doctrine of the trinity, as it is expressed in the First and Second Articles of the English church, were frustrated. The opinions of Peirce, who inclined to Arianism, were not so far confuted by this contest, as to prevent their further dissemination; but, on the contrary, as the examination of one truth leads to the discovery of others, the greater part of the Presbyterians in the western

were induced to examine the subject more thoroughly, and the result was a conviction, that the trinity has no foundation in scripture. Emlyn was an Arian, but Manning rejected the doctrine of the pre-existence. See *Life of Emlyn*, p. 13. The works of Emlyn, in three volumes, are valuable. The two first volumes contain several articles, written with great perspicuity, in defence of the doctrine of the divine unity. The last consists of sermons. A very circumstantial account of the persecutions he suffered for his opinions is prefixed to the first volume. He died July, 30. 1741. Ed.

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counties of England came over not only to the Arian faith, but to all the doctrines of unitarianism.*

The writings of Lardner contributed very much to the diffusion of these sentiments among the Presbyterians. In his work on the Credibility of the Gospel History, he has left a lasting monument of his erudition, industry, and candour. In his letters on the *Logos*, and in his sermons on Philippians, ii. 6, he has proved himself an equally powerful antagonist to the corrupters and the opposers of christianity. Almost all the Presbyterian Dissenters from the Church of England now profess the unitarian faith, if we may take the words in such a sense as to comprise all, who hold to the deity of the Father only.

The English Baptists have almost from their origin been divided into the *Particular* and *General Baptists*. The first adopted the sentiments of Calvin, and the latter those of Arminius. The General Baptists having rejected the doctrine of the trinity, the common test of orthodoxy, serious controversies followed, which gave rise to another secession. The larger part of them now profess the unitarian faith. A party has lately sprung

* Peirce's paraphrase is after the manner of Locke's. His notes are much more voluminous and learned. In his Dedication, prefixed to the Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Colossians, he says, "I am more indebted to Locke, than to any man, for what understanding I have in St. Paul's Epistles, and whose admirable rules and example, I have, the best I could, endeavoured to follow." The notes on the Epistle to the Hebrews in particular, discover great learning and critical research. This was a posthumous work, and at the time of the author's death was finished only to the 34th verse of the tenth chapter, with a small part of the twelfth. It was continued and completed by Mr. Hallett. Peirce left also several valuable Dissertations on different parts of scripture. Locke's Paraphrase and Notes extend to the Epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians; and Peirce's to the Colossians, Philippians, and Hebrews. Ed.

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up, also, among the Particular Baptists, who call themselves *Unionists*, and are unitarians in the Sabellian sense. Robert Robinson, a distinguished baptist, became towards the close of his life a unitarian, although he had before written a defence of the Deity of Christ, which is reckoned one of the best that has ever appeared.* Robinson had native eloquence; not polished, nor such as would always please the refined taste of the learned, but full of thought and feeling, aided by a good voice, expression, and gesture, and peculiarly adapted to inflame the minds of his hearers with the love of religious liberty, which he so ardently cherished.

The *Independents* were much more circumspect in their measures to impede the progress of religious improvement. Always prepared to impose creeds, or fulminate censures, they fortified their pulpits and societies against every species of new doctrine. They even initiate their children into the mysteries of the trinity. They have thus always remained nearly in the same condition. By continual controversies, however, they have gradually acquired a use of language, which is not obviously so much at variance as formerly with the words of scripture. Hence, some of their ministers and most learned men have become unitarians. After this manner Dr. Watts, the distinguished poet and

* This work was called "A Plea for the Divinity of Christ." A full account of the success with which it met among the dignitaries of the Established Church, as well as the leading Dissenters, may be seen in the Eighth Chapter of *Dyer's Life of Robinson*. Proposals were made to him, after this publication appeared, to accept of preferment in the Church, but he firmly rejected them. When Dr. Ogden addressed him, "Do the Dissenters know the worth of the man?" Robinson replied, "The man knows the worth of the Dissenters." The Plea was answered by Lindsey, in a work entitled, "An Examination of Robinson's Plea." Ed.

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theologian, whose hymns are used to this day in the religious services not only of independents, but of almost every other denomination of christians, deviated in his old age very essentially from his former opinions.

Dr. Priestley, one of the few philosophers, who are destined to be celebrated not only in their own age, but throughout all future ages, was born and educated for the ministry among the Independents. After discovering the errors with which he had early been imbued, he rejected them, joined himself to the unitarians, and laboured with great earnestness to recall others, who had fallen into the same errors, to a better faith; nor are we more indebted to any one for the success, which has attended the doctrine of the divine unity, and for its increasing diffusion at the present day. Priestley possessed many qualities, which fitted him in a peculiar manner for the arduous task of a reformer; an understanding, which seemed prepared to grasp all subjects with equal facility, indefatigable labour, a mind unmoved by danger, a most ardent love of searching for truth, and an admirable talent of communicating his knowledge with ease and clearness. Even his enemies allowed him to be a great man; and those, who knew his benevolence, his candour, his goodness of heart, and above all, his piety, by which he was accustomed to refer all things to God, and to acknowledge his providence with gratitude in prosperity, and with humble submission in adversity,—those who knew him in this character not only saw that he was great, but felt that he was the best of men.

Notwithstanding he laboured with more success in his physical researches than scarcely any one of his time, he would not suffer the glory he thus acquired to seduce him from nobler pursuits. Believing no employment so

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honourable, as that of defending the truth of christianity against the skeptical spirit of the age, which was accustomed to regard every thing ancient as unworthy of credit; and being peculiarly qualified by his knowledge of sacred literature and christian antiquity, he devoted himself to the noble work of restoring the religion of Jesus to its primitive purity. It is lamentable, that such a man should experience the ingratitude of the country, which had been so much adorned by the fame of his genius and his discoveries. During the political commotions in France, Priestley was unjustly charged with a desire of promoting excitements in England. This rumour being secretly spread abroad kindled the rage of the people against him; and even under the very eyes of the magistrates, whose duty it was to restrain the populace, his house was attacked, the doors burst open, and his library, philosophical instruments, and manuscripts were committed to the flames; and his own person scarcely escaped in safety. When he reflected, that it would be in vain to appeal to laws from which he could expect no redress, he resolved on seeking a voluntary exile in America, whither he went in the year 1794, and where he died a few years afterwards, forgiving the injuries of his country, and joyfully cherishing the christian's hope. There are very few Englishmen, it is fondly believed, who will not blush to read this short memorial; and if it be lawful to look into futurity, we venture to predict, that still fewer will be found among their posterity, who will not look back with regret and astonishment to this indelible reproach on their country's gratitude.*

* Priestley's residence in America was chiefly at Northumberland, Pennsylvania, where he died on the 6th of February, 1804. He

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A short time before his exile, Priestley was instrumental in forming a society in London, called, "The Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Practice of Virtue, by the Distribution of Books." The object of this society was twofold. First, that all, who believe "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," might have a common bond of union, and a means of combining their strength. Secondly, that such books as are adapted to the diffusion of correct views of christian doctrines, and to the promotion of virtue and piety, might be printed and distributed at a small expense. Among other benefits, which have resulted from this society, it ought particularly to be mentioned, that under its auspices an improved version of the New Testament was published, in the year 1808, according to the text of Griesbach, with marginal notes, and a critical preface. The society is now in a flourishing state, under the care of Thomas Rees L. L. D. who has lately translated the Racovian Catechism into English, and enriched it with notes. Many other institutions of this description have since sprung up in different parts of England, so that in some one of them almost every unitarian society is

published several works at Northumberland, among which were his "Notes on all the Books of Scripture," in four volumes; and his "Church History," in six volumes. The two first volumes of this latter work had been printed in England. Four others were now added.

When Priestley was on the eve of his departure for America, he expressed himself as follows in a letter to a friend; "I leave this country *with every good wish*, not only to my friends, but to my enemies; and hope, that when prejudices are removed, we shall *meet in a better state*." To this amiable and christian spirit, his whole life bore testimony. Ed.

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included. With these, it is not uncommon to have associated what are called "Christian Tract Societies," which are designed for the distribution of such books as have a practical, rather than a controversial tendency.

The trinitarian controversy, heretofore engrossed by the learned, thus passed into the humbler classes of society; whence it soon became necessary, that the pulpit should be made to cooperate with the press, and some measures adopted for the relief of such societies and individuals, as became sufferers by an open renunciation of the popular creeds. Accordingly, an association was formed in 1806, called, "The Unitarian Fund for the Promotion of Unitarianism, by means of popular Preaching." The objects of this society are, first, to afford aid to congregations, whose means are inadequate to a regular administration of the ordinances of religion; secondly, to maintain a body of itinerant preachers, whose office it is to expound the Scriptures to the people upon unitarian principles; and thirdly, to provide for such ministers, as have been reduced to want by a public profession of unitarian sentiments. This institution has tended more than any other to combine and animate the efforts of English Unitarians. By its aid the pure truths of the Gospel have been widely proclaimed. Zealous and able missionaries have traversed England and Wales. Scotland also has been the field of their labours, where several unitarian churches have been planted, and a powerful impulse has been imparted to the progress of truth. The proceedings of the society have, till of late, been directed by the Rev. Robert Aspland, the worthy pastor of the church over which Price and Priestley once presided. Its concerns are now conducted by the Rev. W. J. Fox, minister of the

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Unitarian Society in Parliament Court, Artillery Lane, London.

Ireland has not yet been embraced in the unitarian missions. Numbers in that island, professing Arianism, adhere to the Presbyterian discipline, but it does not appear, that there exists a body of christians convening for public worship, to whom the term unitarian is strictly applicable. In the north and south of Ireland there are doubtless many, as in England, who are favourable to the unitarian faith, yet are content to remain in the church of their fathers.

The civil condition of unitarians at the present day is the same as with other Dissenters. They are indulged in the free exercise of their religion; but all are alike excluded from the honours of the state, who do not conform to the establishment. They are eligible, however, to a seat in parliament; and the law, which imposed upon them the severest penalties, was repealed in 1813, at the motion of William Smith, himself a unitarian, whose services during thirty years in the cause of liberty, entitle him to a high rank among British patriots. This statute, however, had been silently abrogated by disuse.

The necessity of subscription having excluded all unitarian youth from the national universities, it was judged expedient to erect a seminary for their use. It is situated at York, and is under the charge of the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, who is likewise the professor of divinity. The grand principle of study, which he adopts, is, that neither his own opinions, nor those of others shall be taken as necessarily true, but that the students, after collecting all the thoughts of learned and pious men of various persuasions, which can throw light on the Scriptures, shall be allowed to judge for them-

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selves. His colleagues are William Turner, A. M. professor of the Greek and Latin languages, and of ancient and modern history; and John Kenrick, A. M. professor of mathematics and natural philosophy. Many unitarian youth have resorted to the Scottish universities; and many, after completing their academical course in the dissenting colleges, have become public preachers of unitarianism.

Rev. Mr. Little's Discourse on the Mystery of Christ.

A SERMON has just been published in Washington, by the Rev. Robert Little, on the subject of *Mystery*, as this term is used in the Gospel. The author's view is perspicuous and scriptural, and accompanied with several pertinent remarks designed to illustrate and confirm his statements.

This discourse, it seems, was prompted by the attacks and illiberal abuse, with which some good people have thought it their duty to try the christian fortitude and forbearance of our brethren in Washington. It has an intentional bearing on an elaborate work, which a clergyman of that city, professing the Catholic faith, and "Superior of the Catholic Seminary," has commenced against unitarians. We say *commenced*, for although the author threatens a formidable octavo, he does not come down upon us at once, but sends it out in piecemeal, we suppose in imitation of the good old times of the Inquisition, when tortures were protracted, that they might be the more keenly felt. As the shafts, which this new combatant has prepared himself to hurl against the growing cause of unitarianism, are aimed exclusively at our little work, it may be thought, per-

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haps, that a regard for our safety should make us look to our armour, and put ourselves in an attitude of defence. But unfortunately, it may be, we cannot rouse ourselves to any apprehension of danger; and of victory we are not ambitious.

The author's whole object, as far as we can discover, is to show that unitarianism is dangerous and false, because it appeals to the reason, or the understanding of men, in connexion with the Scriptures. And how does he establish this point? Why, truly, by professing to use the very same faculty, which he condemns as so mischievous in unitarians; or in his own lucid phrase, "by a concatenation of principles and logical inferences necessarily connected," and by endeavouring "to show, at one glance, the stress of the argument, and the logical conclusiveness of the whole argumentation." Now we should be glad to know, what a man has to do with logic, or argument, or argumentation, or principles, or inferences, who denies the use of his reason. We confess it seems to us little better than folly to argue with a man, who boasts of rejecting the office of reason, and at the same time commits the absurdity of writing a book in six numbers, professedly to prove by a *series of reasonings*, that reason is a useless thing. And we confess further, that should we often see this same reason running to such results, as in the work to which we are now alluding, we should be the first to acknowledge its impotency.

We have no desire to interfere with the religious concerns of the Catholics. No unitarian in this country, within our knowledge, has ever lisped a word against them. We are willing they should have their religion of mystery and tradition, if they will let us have ours of the Bible and common sense. While

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they are sincere we shall respect, and while they are good we shall esteem them; and not the less for their believing in transubstantiation, or its kindred mystery the trinity.

But if they are not contented to allow us the privilege, which we cheerfully allow them, we beg, for their own sake, that they will be consistent, and not attempt to *reason* with us. Let them enumerate the decisions of the Council of Trent, and if they please repeat the whole Creed of Pius the Fourth; let them quote from Duns Scotus, or the angelical doctor Aquinas, from Honoratus Tournely, Peter Collet, or any other of the learned Sorbonne doctors; let them threaten us with the famous bull Unigenitus of Pope Clement, whose thunders made such havoc with the Jansenism of poor Paschasius Quesnel; let them confound us with the discoveries of their learned commentators, in detecting in every passage of scripture, not only a *literal*, but an *allegorical*, *tropological*, and *anagogical* meaning; let them array against us the whole host of the Fathers from Ignatius to Theophylact, and strengthen their ranks with the still greater host of schoolmen, dogmatists, and mystics, which at a later period adorned the Romish church. Let them do this, and they will be consistent with their principles; but let them take care how they handle an instrument, with which they profess to be so little skilled as reason.

The seventh Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller, *On the Nature and Object of Christian Charity*, is necessarily deferred to our next. We are compelled, also, to omit the Articles of the Charleston Unitarian Book Society.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR

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PROSPECTUS.

The principal object proposed in the present work, is to set forth the doctrines, and inculcate the truths of the christian religion, as they are usually understood by Unitarians. It is published monthly, in numbers, each number containing not less than thirty-six pages.

The annual price to subscribers is *one dollar and fifty cents*, payable on the first of May.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

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No. XII.] DECEMBER, 1821. [Vol. II.

Professor Lindsly's Apology.

We lately made a very curious extract from Professor Lindsly's Discourse, called a Plea for the Theological Seminary at Princeton. [Vol. ii. p. 36.] This extract related to Unitarians, and was accompanied by two or three remarks of our own. The Professor has since published a second edition of his Plea, and added a note to the passage in question. This would seem to have been intended as a sort of apology, explanation, or defence, though it would be difficult, perhaps, to tell precisely which. But whatever it may be called, we feel it a duty of justice to Professor Lindsly to make it as public, as we did that portion of his discourse, which has called it forth. The following are his words.

"In his remarks on the unitarians, the author may be thought to have expressed himself incautiously, perhaps uncharitably. They style themselves christians; and many of them, no doubt, are sincere in their professions. Trinitarians generally, however, do not think them fairly entitled to the appellation of christian; and that the direct tendency of their principles is to subvert the true christian faith. So vast, indeed, is the difference between the trinitarian and the unitarian, as to

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render it obvious, that both parties cannot prefer just claims to the same name. It is admitted, that the controversy about the name depends, after all, on the real nature and character of the Saviour; and that the controversy cannot be decided by ecclesiastical courts or councils; nor by any human confessions, or articles, or creeds, or systems, or authorities whatever—but solely by the Holy Scriptures."

This note shows a spirit of moderation, which we are glad to see, and which we could hardly have expected from the same person, who wrote the extract to which it alludes. We believe the writer may cherish an entire conviction, that no enlightened and candid mind will discover any thing of *caution*, or of *charity*, in his distorted representation of unitarianism, and much less of consistency in what he says of the sentiments of this faith, and of the characters, qualifications, and motives of the men, who embrace these sentiments.

In regard to the import of the *christian name*, which the Professors at Princeton find it so difficult a task to apply to unitarians, so much has already been said in our work on the subject, that we have little more to add. Our interest is chiefly confined to the thing itself; but if we had no good reason for retaining the name, we should be glad to be treated with that courtesy, which we hope always to extend to others. If a true faith, as it regards the nature and offices of Christ, were to be the criterion, there are certainly no persons in the world, whom we should consider less deserving of the name of christians than calvinists. It is not possible for them to think us in greater errors, than we think them. But these are not the principles upon which we act. Calvinists have named themselves christians, and connected the name with their religious faith. If there were

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no other ground than this, we should cheerfully allow it to them. But when we know, that they receive the Gospel of Christ, and consider him as commissioned from heaven, to publish a revelation to the world; when we know, that they interpret his language as their understanding and judgment direct, and profess to make his precepts the rule of their lives, and his promises the strength of their hopes, we have other good reasons for calling them christians.

Now we ask nothing more than this of trinitarians. We glory in Christ, as the founder of a religion, through which we hope to attain salvation and eternal life. We receive him most implicitly, as our Master and our Saviour, study his word with humility, prayer, and devotedness, and then receive it in such a sense, as our understanding and our conscience will warrant; and we also endeavour to conform our lives to the precepts and spirit of the Gospel. We know not what more we can do, or what more others have done, to merit the name of christians. We may be mistaken, and so may they, but our motives and endeavours are the same, and whence these exclusive asserters of the christian name derive the right of bringing us to a judgment, from which they modestly imagine themselves exempt, we have not been able to learn.

Trinitarians acknowledge our sincerity, and of course must allow, that we desire to learn the truth. Professor Lindsly has, also, informed us, that unitarians are abundantly qualified for this task. "Many of the teachers of this heresy," says he, "are thoroughly skilled in scholastic theology, logic, and metaphysics; in history, antiquity, philosophy, and modern sciences; and well versed in the ancient languages." One would suppose that these qualifications, combined with right motives,

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zeal, and an ardent love of truth, would be as likely to lead to accurate results, as any others that can be imagined. But no; although they conduct every body else right, most unfortunately for unitarians, they conduct them wrong; others they allure to light, truth, and heaven, but unitarians they drive into the dismal abyss of error, and hurry them onward in the road to ruin.

The reluctance, which some persons express in allowing any one to have the name of christians but themselves and their favourites, is no new fancy springing out of modern orthodoxy. It is as ancient as the Council of Nice. Even the great Constantine decreed, that the discomfited Arians should no longer be honoured with the title of christians, but should be called, κατ' εξοχην, by way of eminence, Porphyrians. Three years afterwards, however, the emperor revoked his decree, recalled the exiled Arians, and professed to consider them the only true christians in his empire.

Theodosius the younger could not suffer so good an example to escape without imitation. He made a decree, that all his subjects should be of the faith of Damasus, bishop of Rome, and believe in the "consubstantiality and eternal divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or be regarded as heretics and madmen, and be delivered over to the secular arm." Such as would not comply, were deprived by a royal mandate of the name of christians, and the unfortunate disciples of Nestorius were distinguished by the title of Simonians.*

* *Villers' Essay on the Reformation*, p. 434. This matter is discussed with much gravity by the learned Dr. Knowles, Prebendary of Ely, in his *Primitive Christianity*, p. 116, where he reasons very profoundly in defence of these decrees of Constantine and Theodosius. With him the point turns on the articles necessary for salvation, and he says, "The doctrine of the trinity in unity, and unity in

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Whether they, who manifest so much zeal in misnaming unitarians, and in determining who alone are true christians, have been animated by these imperial examples, we are not concerned to inquire.

As to what Professor Lindsly says respecting its being "admitted, that the controversy about the name depends on the real nature and character of the Saviour," we reply, that no such thing has ever been admitted. This would be to suppose, that the nature and character of Christ must in all respects be known, before any one can be called a christian. If such were the condition, who would have the confidence to take upon himself the name? Who will have the presumption to declare himself possessed of a perfect knowledge of a subject, which has divided the opinions of the wise, the pious, and the learned of all ages? What do the Scriptures say? "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." This is the rule of the *Christian faith*, and here is nothing about the precise nature, offices, or character of the Saviour. We are to study the Scriptures, and learn what we can on these subjects, and although we may not all come to the same conclusions, we do not thereby forfeit our title to the christian name; or if we do, it is a forfeiture, which bears equally upon every sect of chris-

trinity, which is the substance of the Athanasian Creed, is the baptismal faith, and that certainly is necessary for salvation, if any faith be." Hence he infers, that it was a thing most worthy of the royal attention of the emperors of antiquity to decree, that Arians and Nestorians should no longer be designated by the christian appellations of Arians and Nestorians, but should be called Porphyrians and Simonians.

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tians, unless some one can prove by something more than pretence to infallibility, that it has the true faith.

We hope the time will come when our opponents will argue with us under a consciousness of their own fallibility, as well as a most confident assurance of ours; when they will recollect, that they are men, as well as we; that the same Being, who has given them understanding, has given it to us; that we feel ourselves responsible to the same God; that we have the same word of divine truth to guide us, and an interest equally strong in its instructions, commands, promises, and consolations, and are, therefore, bound by every thing that is endearing in life, and solemn in the prospects of futurity, to examine with as much earnestness, humility, and anxious solicitude. When they have meditated on these facts, and taken this glance at human nature, we believe they will have more forbearance and less asperity, more charity and less confidence.

Life and Sermons of the late Rev. Dr. Lathrop.

This eminent and venerable divine died in West Springfield, Massachusetts, on the thirty-first day of December, 1820, at the good old age of eighty-nine years. During the whole of this long period, he had held a high place in the respect, attachment, and confidence of all who knew him; was one of those in whose judgment and integrity, the churches throughout his part of the country placed the strongest reliance, and to whose counsel they resorted in all cases of perplexity and doubt; was every where known as an agreeable and powerful preacher, and published at different times five volumes of ser-

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mons, besides many single and occasional discourses, and was equally distinguished for the simplicity, affection, and godly sincerity of his deportment as a christian and a minister. It happens to few men to be the object of so universal and unqualified respect and trust. We believe there has been but one sentiment toward him—a feeling that he was an upright, candid, consistent disciple of his meek and lowly Master. For with all his eminence, he never ceased to be humble, or forgot that others had their rights, and were accountable to another than himself. He was an example of the truest liberality, hating and despising all bigotry, a stedfast advocate and defender of christian liberty, a strenuous opposer of every unholy attempt to "lord it over God's heritage." In losing him, the cause of toleration has lost one of its best friends. May his example not die with him, nor be lost to us or the church.

In his religious belief, he was a calvinist; but he suffered nothing of that belief to affect his character, but what was common to the broad ground of christian truth. It never contracted his heart, or soured his feelings. His spirit could not receive the impression of its harsh and repulsive features; he smoothed them all away, and presented them to us so altered and humanized by their connexion with his own excellent dispositions, that in him Calvinism seemed something almost lovely, and scarcely different from that holy and beautiful system, which we see in the Bible. Indeed, the Bible had been his model; and though he never relinquished the form of sound words, which had been taught him as an essential thing in his youth, and which was associated with all the warmth and happiness of his first impressions; yet he never was a slave to it, and his study to form

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himself on the Scriptures, delivered him from its injurious tendency.

Many, indeed, will not allow that he was a calvinist, he had so little of the peculiarities of that sect. For ourselves, however, we are willing to take him as a moderate, or softened disciple of that school; for it rejoices us to find, that there is strength enough in the great principles of Christ, however mixed or corrupted, to overcome the mixture and corruptions, and form the christian character, in spite of those doctrines, which seem to oppose it.

The example of such a man is an invaluable legacy to the church. It revives a feeling, which many are strenuously endeavouring to root out of the world, that the disciples of Jesus are indeed brethren, and have common interests and sympathies. Such men form, if we may so say, the few remaining links of that charity, which the apostles describe as a perfect bond of union.

The memoir of his own life, which was found after his death, and is now prefixed to a volume of his posthumous sermons, is a very scanty document, and has no connected interest. It could not be expected, indeed, that the life of a retired clergyman should have much incident to amuse. But it is very valuable as giving what appears to be a faithful portrait of his character, as a judicious and prudent pastor. Several anecdotes he relates of himself, and of his mode of treating those who came to him for counsel, or to entrap him, which are excellent, as guides to men in similar situations, and evince a remarkable share of practical wisdom. Of these we should be glad to quote several, but must be satisfied with two, and we select those which are among the most important and pointed. The first is introduced in the Memoir by this, among other remarks; "*We ought*

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always to place religion, where the Scripture has placed it, in holiness of heart and life; and to regard devotional duties as instrumental to this end. We are never to place the essence of religion in things, which are but the means of it."

"A serious man from a neighbouring parish took occasion to inform me, that there was a great revival of religion in his vicinity. I expressed my satisfaction at the intelligence; but asked him, wherein the happy revival discovered itself? Whether the people appeared to be more humble, more condescending, more meek and peaceable, more kind and charitable, better united in their social relations, more virtuous in their manners? He could not answer particularly with respect to these things; but said, 'People were much engaged in attending religious meetings; they had private lectures as often as any transient preacher could be obtained: and they had conferences very frequently—almost every evening.' I observed to him, that attendance on the word preached was highly important, and a hopeful indication; but asked him, how it was on the *Lord's day;* (for I knew they had been shamefully negligent of that duty.) 'Why—no—' said he, 'we don't go to meeting on the sabbath.' What, I inquired, do you neglect God's institutions to observe your own? The prophet marks this as a token of the *decay* of religion amongst the Jews. He answered, 'We do not like our parish minister very well.' I observed to him, that if they had a minister, who did not preach the Gospel, this was a reason why *he* should leave the *pulpit;* not why *they* should leave the meeting-house; and they ought to take regular measures for his removal, and the introduction of a better man. 'O,' said he, 'I don't pretend, but that he preaches the

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Gospel; but there are some subjects, on which he does not preach.' Perhaps he preaches on them, when you are absent. He continued, 'I don't like his *manner* of preaching. He is not so fervent, so engaged, as I wish; he uses his notes too much, &c.' Friend, said I, you well remember, that Paul, Apollos and Cephas all preached in Corinth. They preached the same Gospel; but they had different modes of speaking. And among their hearers, one said, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos; and a third, I am of Cephas. Now on this occasion, Paul told them, they were *carnal.* Apply this to yourself. On the authority of Paul, I tell you, you are carnal. He answered, 'I do not see, but that it is so.'"

The following anecdote bears the same characteristics as the above.

"My steady aim in preaching has been to promote real religion in temper and practice, and to state and apply the doctrines of the gospel in a manner best adapted to this end. Keeping this in view, I have avoided unprofitable controversy. I have been careful not to awaken disputes, which were quietly asleep, and not to waste my own and my hearers' time by reproving imaginary faults, or indifferent customs. Among these I have reckoned the fashion of dress. I was once requested to preach against prevailing fashions. A remote inhabitant of the parish, apparently in a serious frame, called upon me one day, and pressed the necessity of bearing my testimony against this dangerous evil. I observed to him, that as my people were generally farmers in middling circumstances, I did not think they took a lead in fashions;—if they followed them, it was at an humble distance, and rather to avoid singularity, than to encourage extravagance;—that as long as people

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were in the habit of wearing clothes, they must have some fashion or other, and a fashion, that answered the ends of dress, and exceeded not the ability of the wearer, I considered as innocent, and not deserving reproof. To this he agreed; but said, what grieved him was to see people *set their hearts* so much on fashions. I conceded that as modes of dress were trifles compared with our eternal concerns, to set our hearts upon them must be a great sin. But I advised him to consider, that to set our hearts *against* such trifles was the same sin, as to set our hearts *upon* them; and as his fashion was different from those of his neighbours, just in proportion as he set his heart *against theirs*, he set his heart *upon his own*. He was therefore doubly guilty of the very sin he imputed to others; and I desired him to correct his own fault, which he could not but know, and to hope, that his neighbours were less faulty than himself, and less faulty than he had uncharitably supposed them to be. I could not but reflect how easily men deceive themselves, beholding the mote in their brother's eye, and considering not the beam in their own."

Dr. Lathrop's character must rest finally on his sermons, which have had a great popularity and wide circulation, and are written in a direct and forcible style of simplicity, calculated to render them extensively useful. We think the present volume inferiour to those which have preceded it, and not likely to add to his reputation. It contains much good matter, but the sermons want unity and point, and are many of them rather miscellaneous observations than connected discourses. We can conceive of their having been highly interesting in the delivery, but are less calculated, we apprehend, than his former sermons to attract, edify,

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and impress in the closet. No man was ever more faithful and diligent in the study and composition of his sermons, and it may be doubted, if any one has exceeded the extent of his labours in this department of his ministerial duties. "He has left behind him," says the Rev. Mr. Sprague, "about *five thousand* manuscript sermons, a noble monument of his piety, talents, and industry."* He was settled in the ministry, and performed the stated services of his office, during a period of sixty-two years. CRITO.

Jeremy Taylor on the Authority of Reason.

Right reason is so far from being an exile from the inquiries of religion, that it is the great insurance of many propositions of faith; and we have seen the *faith* of men strangely alter, but the *reason* of man can never alter; every rational truth supposing its principles, being eternal and unchangeable. All that is to be done here, is to see that you argue well, that your deduction be evident, that your reason be right; for scripture is to our understandings, as the grace of God to our wills; *that* instructs our reason, and *this* helps our wills; and we may as well choose the things of God, without our wills, and delight in them without love, as understand the scriptures, or make use of them without reason.

[Sermon on a Minister's Duty.

Although every man is bound to follow his guide, unless he believes his guide to mislead him; yet when he sees reason against his guide, it is best to follow his

* Sermon preached at the Interment of the Rev. Joseph Lathrop, D. D. p. 23.

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reason; for though in this he may fall into error, yet he will escape the sin; he may do violence to truth, but never to his own conscience; and an honest error is better than a hypocritical profession of truth, or a violent luxation of the understanding, since if he retains honesty and simplicity, he cannot err in a matter of faith or absolute necessity. God's goodness hath secured all honest and careful persons from that; for other things, he must follow the best guides he can, and he cannot be obliged to follow better than God hath given him.—

He that follows his guide so far as his reason goes along with him, or which is all one, he that follows his own reason, not guided only by natural arguments, but by divine revelation, and all other good means, hath great advantages over him that gives himself wholly to follow any human guide whatsoever, because he follows all their reasons and his own too; he follows them till reason leaves them, or till it seems so to him, which is all one to his particular, for by the confession of all sides, an erroneous conscience binds him, when a right guide does not bind him. But he that gives himself up wholly to a guide is oftentimes, I mean if he be a discerning person, forced to do violence to his own understanding, and to lose all the benefit of his own discretion, that he may reconcile his reason to his guide.—

It is best to follow our guides, if we know nothing better; but if we do, it is better to follow the pillar of fire, than a pillar of cloud, though both possibly may lead to Canaan; but then also it is possible that it may be otherwise. But I am sure, if I do my own best; then if it be best to follow a guide, and if it be also necessary, I shall be sure by God's grace and my own en-

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deavour to get to it; but if I, without the particular engagement of my own understanding, follow a guide, possibly I may be guilty of extreme negligence, or I may extinguish God's Spirit, or do violence to my own reason. And whether intrusting myself wholly with another, be not a laying up my talent in a napkin, I am not so well assured. I am certain the other is not: And since another man's answering for me will not hinder, but that I also shall answer for myself; as it concerns him to see he does not wilfully misguide me, so it concerns me to see that he shall not if I can help it; if I cannot, it will not be required at my hands; whether it be his fault, or his invincible error, I shall be charged with neither.

This is no other than what is enjoined as a duty. For since God will be justified with a free obedience, and there is an obedience of understanding as well as of will and affection, it is of great concernment, as to be willing to believe whatever God says, so also to inquire diligently whether the will of God be so as is pretended.* Even our acts of understanding are acts of choice, and therefore it is commanded as a duty, to "*Search the Scriptures, to try the spirits whether they be of God or no, of ourselves to be able to judge what is right to try all things, and to retain that which is best.*" For he that resolves not to consider, resolves not to be careful whether he have truth or no, and therefore hath an affection indifferent to truth or falsehood, which is all one as if he did choose amiss; and since when things are truly propounded and made reasonable and intelligible we cannot but assent, and then it is no thanks to

* Mat. xv. 10. John v. 40. 1 John iv. 1. Ephes. v. 17. Luke xxiv. 25. Rom. iii. 11. and i. 28. Apoc. ii. 2. Acts xvii. 11.

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us; we have no way to give our wills to God in matters of belief, but by our industry in searching it and examining the grounds upon which the propounders build their dictates. And the not doing it is oftentimes a cause that God gives a man over εἰς νοῦν ἀδόκιμον, unto a reprobate and undiscerning mind and understanding.

And this very thing, though men will not understand it, is the perpetual practice of all men in the world that can give a reasonable account of their faith. For if you tell them, Scripture and tradition are their rules to follow, they will believe you when they know a reason for it, and if they take you upon your word, they have a reason for that too, either they believe you a learned man, or a good man, or that you can have no ends upon them, or something that is of an equal height to fit their understandings. If you tell them they must believe the church, you must tell them why they are bound to it, and if you quote Scripture to prove it, you must give them leave to judge, whether the words alledged speak your sense or no, and therefore to dissent if they say no such thing. And although all men are not wise, and proceed discreetly, yet all make their choice some way or other. He that chooses to please his fancy, takes his choice as much, as he that chooses prudently. And no man speaks more unreasonably, than he that denies to men the use of their reason in the choice of their religion.—

In this question, by Reason I do not mean a distinct topic, but a transcendent that runs through all topics; for reason, like logic, is instrument of all things else, and when revelation and philosophy and public experience, and all other grounds of probability or demonstration have supplied us with matter, then reason does but make use of them; that is, in plain terms, there being so

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many ways of arguing, so many sects, such differing interests, such variety of authority, so many pretences, and so many false beliefs, it concerns every wise man to consider which is the best argument, which proposition relies upon the truest grounds; and if this were not his only way, why do men dispute and urge arguments, why do they cite councils and fathers, why do they alledge Scripture and tradition, and all this on all sides, and to contrary purposes? If we must judge, then we must use our reason; if we must not judge, why do they produce evidence? Let them leave disputing and decree propositions magisterially, but then we may choose whether we will believe them or no; or if they say we must believe them, they must prove it, and tell us why. And all these disputes concerning tradition, councils, fathers, are not arguments against or besides reason, but contestations and pretences to the best arguments, and the most certain satisfaction of our reason.

But then all these coming into question, submit themselves to reason, that is, to be judged by human understanding, upon the best grounds and information it can receive. So that Scripture, tradition, councils, and fathers, are the evidence in a question, but reason is the judge, that is, we being the persons that are to be persuaded, we must see that we be persuaded reasonably, and it is unreasonable to assent to a lesser evidence, when a greater and clearer is propounded, but of that every man for himself is to take cognizance if he be able to judge, if he be not, he is not bound under the tie of necessity to know any thing of it; that that is necessary shall be certainly conveyed to him; God that best can, will certainly take care for that; for if he does not, it becomes to be not necessary; or if it should still remain necessary, and he be damned for not knowing it,

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and yet to know it be not in his power, then who can help it? There can be no further care in this business. In other things, there being no absolute and prime necessity, we are left to our liberty to judge that way, that makes best demonstration of our piety and of our love to God and truth, not that way that is always the best argument of an excellent understanding, for this may be a blessing, but the other only is a duty.

[Liberty of Prophesying.

Rev. Mr. Ware's Historical Discourses.

The Rev. Henry Ware, of Boston, has lately published two Historical Discourses, which were preached by him on a particular occasion in that place. They relate more immediately to the history and concerns of the church and society, over which he is settled. But they have more than a local importance. Together with the body of notes which accompany them, and which appear to have been collected with diligent research, they comprise much valuable information for the general historian. He has delineated at some length the characters of his two memorable predecessors, Increase Mather, and Cotton Mather; the former conspicuous for the part he acted in the early history of New England, both in a political and a theological capacity, and the latter renowned as the learned and eccentric author of the *Magnalia Christi*. Mr. Ware's example is worthy of imitation. If clergymen generally would adopt the same plan, we should soon have materials for an accurate and complete history of our country.

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Seventh Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller. On the Nature and Objects of Christian Charity.

Sir,

The fourth division of your Reply is occupied in explaining your views of christian charity. As this service was gratuitous on your part, and not called for by the original conditions of the subject, I should not think it necessary to bring your remarks under consideration, were it not, that you have contrived to deduce from them a sort of apology for the harsh and revolting aspect of your charges.

You introduce the subject in the following words. "My Baltimore accuser dwells much and pathetically on what he considers a gross violation of christian charity, in speaking as I have done of unitarians." And then you go on to inform your readers, that this *accuser* takes charity to "consist in entertaining a favourable opinion of others, however widely they may differ from us on the most essential points; in supposing that they have inquired after truth as candidly as we have done; and in taking for granted, that there is as much reason to hope they will be finally accepted of God, as that we ourselves shall be accepted." Against this sense of the term you loudly bear your testimony, and affirm, that "though current enough in common society, among a thousand other popular crudities, it is certainly not found in scripture, and ought to receive no countenance from any accurate thinker." After this formality of statement, and freedom of censure, your readers could hardly be prepared to learn, that the word charity is not once mentioned in my letter, as being necessarily understood in any definite sense. It is never used except incidentally, and in each instance I should

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be willing, that your own meaning should be affixed. I had said, that the censorship you exercised, and the judgment you passed against unitarians, were "at variance with the letter and spirit of the Gospel of the Saviour, and even the common principles of charity," and I hold this to be equally true, in whatever sense you may choose to receive the word charity. And yet, upon the strength of this phrase, and this alone, you talk about my *dwelling much* and *pathetically* on what I consider a *gross violation* of this virtue. But it is enough to have mentioned these things, without attempting to conjecture by what accidents you were led into them. They conducted you to the subject of charity, and to this I propose at present to confine my attention.

I will commence with your definition. "The word charity, as used in scripture is equivalent to the word *love*. To exercise charity towards another, in the language of the Bible, is to love him. I may, therefore, exercise the most perfect charity towards one, whose principles I reprobate, and whose conduct I abhor, and ought to abhor." Before I examine the merits of this definition, as founded on the language and spirit of scripture, allow me to ask one or two questions. You make the term *charity* exactly synonymous with *love*. When you speak of loving a man, what is the specific object of your affection? Is not this comprised in such of his moral qualities, as come within your notice, and gain your approbation? Take a man's principles and his conduct away, and what is left, which you can either love or hate? His principles are interwoven with all the moral elements of his nature, and his conduct is the only test we can have of the rectitude and purity of his motives; or, in other words, the principles and the conduct constitute the whole moral man. Now what kind

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of love is that, which is extended to a person whose principles are to be reprobated, and whose conduct is to be abhorred? Surely not the love of a virtuous, pious mind. Such a mind can love only virtue and piety. Hence the very terms of your definition should have proved to you its looseness and fallacy, and suggested the necessity of a virtue essentially different in its operations from the general principle of love; a virtue by which the compassion and good affections of our nature may be brought into exercise, in favour even of the unprincipled and the vicious, whom we cannot in any proper sense of the word love, except in proportion as we are willing to dispense with holiness and virtue in ourselves.

And again, on the principles of calvinism it is impossible for the charity, which you define, to be extended to any but a very small part of the human race. How can a good man *love* any of his fellow beings, who are under a sentence of eternal reprobation by an unalterable decree of God, who are totally depraved, destitute of all good and wholly inclined to all evil, whose every deed is wickedness, and whose every thought is rebellion against their Maker? If this be possible, it is a mystery in ethics, which I confess my inability to solve. No good man could love such beings, because every thing in them must be wicked, odious, and repulsive. He might, even under these circumstances, have for them a fellow feeling, or an affection, which the world have united in calling charity, because this dreadful condition would not be their fault, but their misfortune in having been born into the world. Calvinism, therefore, requires something more, than your general virtue of love, unless it would teach its advocates to withhold all civility and kindness from the great mass of men, who were either brought into the world by the Deity with the express

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purpose of making them eternally miserable, or who have not yet been released from the bondage of their inherent depravity by a miraculous visitation of divine grace.

But these distinctions, you will say, perhaps, are "popular crudities," the pastimes of erring reason, which may be well enough in common use, but are not sanctioned by the Scriptures, and "ought to receive no countenance from any accurate thinker." That charity requires us to think favourably of the opinions of our brethren, to suppose them sincere and conscientious in the search of truth, and to indulge a hope, that they may be in a fair way of meeting the divine acceptance, you consider a vulgar notion, and "assert with confidence," that it makes no part of the true scripture doctrine. This was a point of much importance in your apology, or defence, for if your position can be made out, then it follows, that unitarians are beside themselves to imagine any want of charity in those, who, in their kind solicitude, call them heretics, utter anathemas against their opinions, and in the spirit of christian love console them with the comforting declarations, that they are not christians at all, and no more in the way of salvation than Mohammedans and Jews, that they cling to "dreadful, soul destroying errors," and in their morals are to be numbered among the loose and licentious, upon whose lives religion has no purifying power. These are all to be taken as the genuine fruits of charity, since it is made to appear, that they may be accompanied with a due degree of scriptural love.

Let us come now to the primary object of inquiry, and endeavour to ascertain what the Scriptures teach respecting the virtue of charity, and whether it be not

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allowable to exercise this virtue towards the sincere *opinions* of our fellow christians.

When you say, that "in the language of Scripture charity is equivalent to the word love," I know not what you mean, unless it be that the original Greek word, which denotes the general principle of love, is sometimes rendered into English by the word charity. This is not denied. It proves nothing, however, except that there was no term in Greek exactly corresponding to the word charity in English. The meaning of the Greek word is to be determined, like the meaning of almost every other word, not by assigning to it an arbitrary, undeviating signification, but by the connexion in which it stands; and this is no difficult thing. Such an attempt at induction might have amazed the schoolmen, and confounded Aquinas himself, but since the days of Locke and Reid the province of thought is too well understood, and the principles of language are too easily apprehended, to admit of difficulties in this process. It is a rule as old as Hilary, that the force of words depends on their sense, and not on their sound. *Verba non sono sed sensu sapiunt.* This rule is not to be deserted in the Scriptures.

Schleusner, whose accuracy and discrimination will not be called in question by any biblical scholar, has assigned no less than six distinct significations to the word of which we are now speaking. I will not enumerate these, but mention three only, which will be sufficient to show the incorrectness of your assertion.

First, it means the general principle of love, or "an invariable preference of Good," as this principle is defined by a late acute and philosophical writer.* This is the kind of love, which the Deity exercises towards

* Cogan's Philosophical Treatise on the Passions, p. 25.

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his rational creatures, and which they are capable of exercising towards him. The word always implies this sense, when it is used to denote the love of God.

Secondly, it sometimes means alms-giving, or the conferring of benefits. St. Paul praises the Thessalonians for their *labour of love*, or their kind offices in relieving his wants and ministering to his comfort. He says to the Hebrews, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and *labour of love*, which ye have showed toward his name in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Here the apostle alludes to their kindness in contributing to the temporal necessities of the persons, who had laboured among them in the ministry. In both cases the word has the sense of charity, as we use the term to denote alms-giving.*

Thirdly, a meaning of the word, which is by far the most frequent in the New Testament, is that embracing the thoughts, feelings, and actions of men in their intercourse with one another. This is the charity, which the apostle says is greater than faith or hope, and which is so beautifully described in the thirteenth chapter of

* As most of the valuable Manuscripts, and all the ancient Greek commentators, omit the word κοπου, *labour*, in the text last quoted, Peirce, in accordance with Mill, thinks it was not written in the original. But, as he justly observes, the sense will not be altered by leaving it out. And he adds, "What the *love* was they showed, the apostle more fully declares, Heb. x. 33, 34. A very delicate way he takes here to commend the kindness they had shown him, by representing it to have been done out of respect for God himself." *Peirce in Loc.* For a parallel example of the bounty of the Philippians, see Phil. iv. 18.

The word, αγαπη, appears to be used in a similar sense, 1 Thess. v. 13. "Esteem them very highly *in love* for their work's sake." That is, take care to make proper returns for their labours by your deeds of bounty and charity; or, as Schleusner paraphrases it, *liberalitati in sustentandis et alendis doctoribus studete.*

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the first epistle to the Corinthians. It is that virtue, which displays itself in active deeds of benevolence, gentleness, mercy; which teaches us humility, forbearance, and a just sense of the wants and the deserts of our fellowmen; and which, in short, preserves and regulates the order of society, by restraining the passions and bringing out the good qualities of our nature. It is a virtue arising entirely out of the condition of men, their mutual dependence, and the necessity of reciprocal benefits. If human nature were perfect, if we had neither faults nor wants, such a virtue could not exist.

That there is a broad and strongly marked distinction between the three meanings here noticed, is manifest on the slightest inspection. The same thing will be confirmed by comparing the properties of the virtue under each signification. No use of language will allow you to speak of the charity of God. The duties, which men owe to one another, or the duties of charity, have no relation, either to the character or the actions of the Supreme Being; nor have they any concern in our relations to him. We cannot be charitable to God, although we may and ought to love him. In giving alms, our charity may prompt us to relieve the distresses of a man, whose infamy and vices utterly forbid the exercise of love. We may comply with the commands of our Saviour, and have charity for our enemies in both of the two latter senses above mentioned, but we have not power to do so much violence to human nature, as to love them in the first sense, while we know they are our enemies, and resolved to do us an injury when an opportunity shall offer.

But there is no occasion to dwell on this point. Nothing can be more clear than these distinctions, and

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I have only designed to show by a few hints with what disregard of all critical precision you spoke, when you "asserted with confidence," that the word charity means precisely the same thing as the word love, and with what a fallacious and unscriptural principle you started, in laying down the rules of conduct, which should be followed by christians of different persuasions in regard to each other. Love is a principle, charity a virtue; love is an inclination to good, charity is active goodness; love is an involuntary emotion, charity a duty; love is an original affection, making a part of our nature, and communicated by the Deity himself, charity is a rule of moral action, founded on our condition in the world, and limited to our intercourse with men; love is a disposition of the mind, charity an act of the will, bringing this disposition to bear on particular objects; love can be excited only towards what is good, charity can never be extended to positive excellence, but is confined to the frailty, faults, wants, and sufferings of men. Do you say, after all, that charity is only a modification of love? Let this be admitted, and it will prove them not to be the same thing. Every virtue is a modification of this principle, yet every virtue is not love. All the moral attributes of the Deity are but so many modifications of his love, but will you say that his goodness, justice, mercy, wisdom are all synonymous with love, and consequently with each other? Piety, reverence, thanksgiving, and praise to our Maker, and also benevolence, tenderness, sympathy, generosity, compassion, lenity, are all modifications of this general principle; and it would be just as correct a use of language to say, that each of these virtues is equivalent to love, as it is to say the same of charity.

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Your rule may be applied to all other words in the New Testament, as well as to the one which is translated love and charity. Take, for instance, the word, which is usually rendered *righteousness.* In the original it means *justice.* There is, nevertheless, a very striking difference between these two words in our language. No man can be righteous without being just, but justice alone would be accounted a very small part of righteousness. The former implies nothing more, than rendering to every man his just due, while the latter embraces all the virtues of piety and morality, and is nearly the same as holiness. Your rule would require you to say, that as the word righteousness, "as used in Scripture," is equivalent to the word justice, nothing more is demanded of you to be a righteous man, than to be just, and that to pretend to any distinction here is one of the "popular crudities," which "ought to receive no countenance from any accurate thinker." By the same process, and without continuing your philology much farther, you might fall into the track of Horne Tooke, and convince yourself, that whatever is *commanded* is right and just, and thus discover the only reason, which perhaps has ever been given, why the commands, or in other words, the decisions, creeds, and decrees of councils, conventions, assemblies, and synods should be binding on the consciences and faith of christians.

Numerous examples of this sort might be recurred to, which would give additional proof of the error of your theory, and the mischievous tendency of its application.* On the whole, few things are more evident,

* The word, πνευμα, *spirit*, Schleusner calls πολυσημος, and assigns to it no less than *twenty six* distinct classes of significations,

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than that the notion under which you laboured to screen the rough features of your charges, receives as little support from the Scriptures, as from the understanding, the prevailing sentiments, and the best feelings of men. It is, moreover, fraught with many evils. If admitted in explaining the Scriptures, it would introduce utter confusion, and make the plainest things in the word of God ambiguous, and unintelligible. If carried into practice, it would have a most serious, and unhappy influence on the temper, morals, and character of christians. It virtually teaches, that all the moral qualities and exercises may be resolved into the general principle of love. For if charity means love, so does benevolence, and so do generosity, sympathy, tenderness, mercy; and the numerous duties, which these rules of virtue, and in fact, all rules of virtue, require, may be dispensed with, if you can satisfy yourself, that you have abundance of love. It is true, this happy simplicity in the great science of morals would relieve you from the grievance of thinking favourably of opinions, which do not in all respects accord with your own. It would leave no tax on your humility, your good nature, your love of truth, or desire for the progress of christian knowledge. There would be no occasion for these virtues, in dealing with our brethren, while the only thing requisite were a due caution not to resist the mechanical impulse of love. Unfortunately for this scheme, no such simplicity exists, either in

as it is used in the New Testament. Among others are life, breath, air, wind; the soul, the mind; a divine influence, the invisible and extraordinary gifts of the Deity. It would be as proper to say, that either of these is equivalent to the principal one, and that the word may always be understood in any one of these significations, as it is in your example of love and charity.

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the Scriptures, in the laws of human nature, or the sense of mankind.

I consider it established, therefore, that your views of this subject are erroneous, and that men have not been unwittingly duped into such a "crudity," as you imagine, in consenting to make it a christian duty to have some respect for the serious endeavours, the anxious inquiries, and honest opinions of such, as have not been able to run in precisely the same path as themselves. In what I have further to say, it will be considered as settled, that there is such a virtue as charity, distinct from all other virtues, and that this is taught in the Scriptures. I have only to make a few remarks on the unreasonableness, danger, and evils of neglecting this virtue, and blotting it, as you have done, out of the catalogue of christian duties.

Charity has its origin, as we have seen, in the imperfections of men. It supposes defects and faults, not as implying crime, or designed offence, or wilful perversion of the gifts of heaven. The ignorance, prejudices, and errors of honest men, arise out of their weakness, and not out of a disposition to evil. No man errs in sincere opinion against his judgment, or sense of right. In practice he may err against these, and also against truth, conscience, reason. The errors of the honest man's opinions are innocent, but the errors of the wicked man's practice are criminal. By your principles these are confounded. This is preposterous. Wicked deeds claim neither charity, nor love, nor sufferance. Involuntary, innocent errors are identified with the imperfections of human nature, and every one's own frailty should convince him, that they demand the kind forbearance, or in other words, the charity, of the humble and the pious.

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It may be added, that to withhold charity from such errors, is to inflict an injury, and be guilty of an offence. What more can you do to injure a person, whose faith you do not approve, than to charge people to beware of his discourse and his society, to take care how they read his books, charging him with heresy, declaring his morals to be infected by his principles, and pronouncing him unworthy of the christian name? In such a case, you evidently make opinion a crime, and may thus fix a reproach in the fairest character, and scatter the seeds of malevolence in the religious affections of the unwary and the uninformed. Such insinuations and charges are worse than open slander, and public defamation, because they go abroad under the protecting garb of religion, and plead a zeal for God, even amidst their greatest enormities. They are fraught with mischief in every quarter. They testify the ill temper of the person by whom they are dispersed; they wantonly impugn the character of the virtuous and sincere; they deceive and corrupt the minds of the unsuspecting, and encourage the illiberal in their bitterness and unchristian revilings.

That the advocates for the kind of christian charity, which shows itself in effects like these, have always considered opinion a crime, has been thoroughly proved by the conduct of churches. Why else have they so often brought down the terrors of excommunication upon some of their members, whose lives were irreproachable, but whose spirit of inquiry, and honest avowal of their sentiments, have excited the suspicion, that they were penetrating too deeply into the dark subtleties, and secret corners of some of the received dogmas? Why the anathemas, which different churches have heaped with exhaustless bounty on others? In the

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midst of these imaginary works of sanctity and *love*, where is that charity, which "suffereth long and is kind, which doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but beareth all things, and endureth all things?" She has fled to her native skies, or is hidden in the depths of the earth; she is any where, rather than in the bosoms of her pretended votaries, inflaming their mistaken zeal, and approving their unholy purposes.

Without this charity, there can be no unity of consent, feeling, or action, either among christian sects or individuals. Differences exist in matters of opinion, and not of action. No sect, I believe, has ever made any peculiar or extraordinary acts of holiness the characteristics of its party. Hence, upon your scheme of loving the person, but "reprobating his principles," every sect must reprobate every other, for as sects they differ only in regard to "principles." This remark is not theoretical. It is verified by the example of every one, who betrays a fondness for denouncing any sect. The Rev. Dr. Brett, an Episcopalian, in a laboured discourse to establish your favourite notion of exclusive charity, thinks it a great hardship indeed, that he may not be permitted, in what he conceives to be the true spirit of christian moderation, to condemn Socinians and Quakers, and "those who refuse baptism to infants," and also to call such persons schismatics, as take it upon them to "renounce episcopal government, and contemn the orders and services of *our* church, setting up for themselves teachers according to their own fancies, and separating themselves from our communion, as the presbyterians and independents."* And I suppose you would think it an

* Sermon on True Moderation, as contained in the *Churchman armed against the Errors of the Times*, vol. iii. p. 12.

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equal hardship, if you were denied the liberty of retorting upon episcopalians thus charitably inclined, and of clearing yourself from the imputation of schism, and maintaining that *their* church is no true church, but a defective branch of a corrupt stock, "setting up for itself teachers to its own fancies," and sadly deforming the primitive faith and discipline. This you would no doubt call moderation and charity, and you would only be following the example of Dr. Brett, and every other impugner of a faith, which differs from his own.

Trace this species of charity through its windings. To what does it come at last? It terminates in disaffections, divisions, wranglings, and all the desolating effects of the unholy passions. Let the application be more particular. No two men think alike. Opinions are as various as the objects of thought. The whole christian world is made up of persons, whose opinions are tinged with every shade, from the brilliant light of truth to the blackest darkness of error. What individual of the whole number can have the good fortune to be favoured with your charity? In accordance with your notion, the exercise of this virtue must be restricted to him alone, whose opinions are like your own. But where shall this person be found? At a certain point your charity will begin, but where is this point? In how many things must there be an agreement, and what are these things? Till this be fairly established, the conclusion of the whole matter is, you can have no charity for any man but yourself. This scheme implies an unavailing attempt to force nature. When you can make all the trees of the forest shoot forth leaves of the same texture, shape, and colour; when every blossom and every spire of grass shall exactly resemble every other; when every man's features, form, and di-

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mensions shall be alike; and all minds shall have the same degree of wisdom, intelligence, and strength, then the fond dream of producing uniformity of opinion will be realized, and then, and not before, some straggling beams of your charity may go abroad, to look for other objects than yourself to act upon.*

Universal experience has also taught lessons, which it is impossible for us to forget. Persecutions, proscriptions, wars, murders, have been the bitter and detestable fruits of the insane zeal, which the spirit of uncharitableness, not as exercised towards the practices, but the opinions of men, has kindled and nourished in the breasts of the ignorant, the bigoted, the ambitious, the hypocritical, in every age of the christian church. Men have sanctified the most infamous purposes, by cloaking their crimes under the pretence of suppressing heresy, and protecting the faith. There is not a deeper blot in human nature, nor a more glaring outrage upon reason, nor a stronger verification of the maxim, *humanum est errare et insanire*, than the treatment, which christians have offered to one another, simply because they could not agree in opinion. By their cruelties, they have done as much as the power of man could do to exterminate one half of the world, and make hypocrites of the other. Do you suppose the number of heretics in France, and of Jews in Spain and Portugal, was diminished by the barbarous laws made against them, and by the bloody orgies of the Inquisition? No. Hypocrites were multiplied, every wicked passion was fanned into a flame, and the prayers

* Some excellent reflections on this topic may be seen in the Rev. Dr. Channing's "Remarks on the Rev. Dr. Worcester's Second Letter to him on American Unitarianism." p. 24.

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of the sufferers ascended to heaven, mingled with imprecations of vengeance on their relentless persecutors.

All this was done, let it be remembered, without sacrificing a particle of that love, which you describe as the essence of charity, Nay, so far from it, that a love for the souls of men was frequently made the primary cause of the vilest persecutions. This was love without charity, and these were its genuine fruits. The topic of persecution is too trite to need enlargement. It is enough for you to cast upon it a single glance, and then recollect, that the principle which you would establish, and under which you would shelter your charges of heresy and immorality against unitarians, is the same, which has ministered to the rage of fanaticism, the cupidity of avarice, the lust of unprincipled ambition, and the tortures of cruelty.

These hints are not introduced with the supposition, that such abuses are any longer to be apprehended, but only to show what have actually been the consequences where your principle has operated to its fullest extent. Opinions, and not actions, have invariably been the food of the consuming fire of persecution. A proper charity for such opinions, would have extinguished the devouring flame, spared the lives of the innocent, and raised the white banner of peace, instead of the bloody flag of death and desolation. The principle will for ever remain the same, and be equally opposed to the pure spirit of christianity. It may stop short of actual persecution, not for the want of a latent disposition, but of power, and the approbation of public sentiment.

The days of persecution it is to be hoped, and perhaps believed, have run their course. They have settled into the abyss of time, and will never again be drawn out to darken and disgrace the history of hu-

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man nature. The hideous spirit of those days, whose poisonous breath infected all that was pure in the human heart, and blasted all that was fair and lovely in the christian scheme, is powerless, subdued by the majesty of truth, and the rising strength of unperverted reason. Heaven has smiled on the land, and the chimeras, which so long brooded in the imagination, and settled upon the seul, have gradually dissolved and disappeared. If some traces of them still remain, they are like the inscriptions on the mouldering monuments of antiquity, losing something of their distinctness and form with the return of every sun. The finger of time will at length erase them, and leave a fair surface, on which shall be written, in characters that can never be defaced, the motto of all succeeding ages—truth and christian charity.

Again, your view of charity is at variance with the positive precepts of the Saviour. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is an imperious command, and is enforced by the beautiful illustration, which immediately follows it, respecting the mote in a brother's eye. Now this command could not relate to conduct. Every one has a right, and ought to judge the wicked deeds even of a brother. It relates to motives, intentions, and thoughts in forming opinions. These we are not at liberty to judge, or censure, for a very plain reason, because they are beyond our reach. And we encroach upon a prerogative, which God only can claim, when we set up a tribunal to take cognizance of the consciences of men. It is a fact, which ought to be impressed on the minds, and *engraven in the hearts* of all those worthy christians, who are fond of placing themselves in the judgment seat of such a tribunal, that

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Jesus neither condemned, censured, nor judged any man for his errors.

The severe denunciations, which he uttered against the Pharisees, were directed in no case against their opinions, but their hypocrisy, and wicked conduct. The heresies of the Saducees, and the miserable superstitions of the Pharisees, drew from him no expressions of reproach, nor kindled a spirit of exclusion. He worshipped in their synagogues, and associated freely and cordially with all good men. He never even rebuked his disciples for their errors of opinion, although some of them were of no favourable tendency. If he told them of the weakness of their faith, as he occasionally did, it was with a gentleness consistent with his knowledge of their sincerity, and a proper sense of their imperfection. He did not try their feelings, nor abuse their integrity to themselves and their God, by dogmatical assertions, harsh epithets, and opprobrious names. He did not seek to alienate from them the affections of their brethren, nor to excite the suspicions of the indifferent, by proclaiming in the ears of the world their "dreadful, soul destroying errors;" or by calling them enemies of the gospel, who denied their Lord, and whom it was sinful to bid God speed; or by charging them with embracing a system, which was "most acceptable to the worldly minded and licentious," and by which they were "not in the smallest degree sanctified." No language of this choice texture can be found in the discourses of our divine Master. We are indebted for it to the amiable spirit of his followers in later times.*

* A large portion of the sermon on the Mount is a comment on that kind of charity, which you call a "popular erudity." Jeremy Tay-

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Another evil consequence of your view of charity, is the discouragement of religious inquiry. Nor is this of small magnitude. Till we think it indifferent whether we have truth or falsehood, inquiry in religion is a duty of the highest obligation. Truth yields only to inquiry, and there can be no progress in truth, while the freedom of investigation is restrained. But the man, who thinks it a deed of charity to deprecate the faith of another man, and to impress the stigma of immorality on his character as a necessary accompaniment of his faith, must have so unshaken a conviction of his own infallibility, as not to suffer himself to examine one step beyond his present acquisitions. Let all men have the same confidence, self estimation, and charitable turn, and of course each one would think it a duty to adhere to his own faith, and deprecate the faith of all others. When charity to others requires us to judge their opinions, charity to ourselves would forbid any scrutiny into our own.

If you can get up the cry of heresy against a particular tenet, all, who regard your authority, and value your reputation, and do not profess to be well informed on the subject, will take care to support you, repeat your cry, and reiterate your alarms. To inquire afterwards would be to reproach themselves for their precipitancy and want of discernment. Hence, the man of charity not only shuts his own ears to all new counsel, and his understanding to all further wisdom, but throws the mantle of ignorance over as many as come within his reach.

lor's Eleventh Discourse in his Life of Christ is on *Charity*, as taught in this sermon. He considers it under three heads; Forgiving, Giving, Not Judging.

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On looking back to the view, which has been taken, it will be perceived, that so far from charity having nothing to do with opinions, it is really and properly confined to these alone. We ought not to be charitable to wicked deeds, and good ones do not need in their behalf the exercise of this virtue. Opinions are involuntary. It would be a crime for a man to pretend to believe contrary to his actual conviction; and whoever requires a particular faith, before he will let his charity appear, is in some degree accessory to such a crime.

It remains only to notice two or three texts of scripture, which you have quoted to fortify your sentiments and in justification of your charges. The first is that, which contains the denunciation of our Saviour against the Scribes and Pharisees. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"* In pronouncing this sentence, if the common notion of charity be correct, you observe, "our blessed Saviour most grievously offended against this duty." Had you paid any regard to the whole chapter preceding, you could never have fallen into so great a mistake, as to quote this passage in your vindication. It has not the remotest bearing on the opinions of the Scribes and Pharisees, but is pointedly aimed at their conduct. It was uttered immediately after enumerating their vices, and charging them with hypocrisy, with making long prayers for a pretence, deceiving the unwary, neglecting judgment, mercy, and faith, and being guilty of extortion, excess, iniquity. In this connexion, the text is in no respect to your purpose, and might be spoken by any person against others, whose conduct resembled that of the Pharisees, without en-

* Matthew xxiii. 23.

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croaching on the charity, for which I have been contending.

You next bring to your aid the following passage. "He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds."* Here again you have run into the same mistake as above. The apostle is not reproving errors, but vices. The men of whom he is speaking, he tells us were "deceivers." This shows them not to have been condemned for being led away by their erroneous opinions, but for attempting to impose on others, what they knew to be false. They taught false doctrines knowingly, and for selfish and wicked purposes. The apostle considered them *transgressors*, as is manifest from a clause, which, for some reason, you omitted in your quotation. "Whosoever *transgresseth*, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." It is moreover intimated in positive terms, that their "*evil deeds*" were the objects of this reprobation. To teach what they knew was false, with the intention of leading people into wicked practices, was neither a mistake of judgment, nor error of opinion, but a deliberate crime. To such persons no laws of charity afford a refuge.†

* 2 John 9, 10, 11.

† Whitby says of the phrase, *Bid him not God speed*, that "it seems to be taken from the Jews, who were forbid to say *God speed* to a man that was excommunicated, or was *doing any evil action*." And in the present instance he adds, that it enjoins "a prohibition from doing any thing, which imports a consent to, or approbation of the evil actions" of one, to whom it may be applied. *Paraphrase on John* 2, 11.

Le Clerc remarks on the passage, that the persons alluded to were

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You have at least the encouragement of not being solitary in your application of this passage. It is often in the mouths of the orthodox of the present day. They have acquired a habit, or set up a fashion of calling every thing heresy, which deviates from the train of thought into which their minds have chanced to run, and to such persons as cannot force themselves into this track, however sincere and honest, however virtuous and heavenly minded, they seem to regard it the highest test of their piety, and zeal for the cause of God, to deny the christian civilities; and they make all smooth and quiet with their consciences by shielding themselves under the example of St. John, who cautioned the christians of his time, or rather the "elect lady, and her children," to whom he wrote his second epistle, not to associate with deceivers, transgressors, and evil doers. Such is the power of orthodoxy to blind the eyes, cloud the understanding, narrow the mind, shut up the heart, and freeze the affections. Else why is this passage, and others like it, so often perverted to give countenance to the unchristian spirit, and unholy practices, which some, who profess to take their religion from the Bible, exhibit towards others, who are in no degree behind them in their earnest inquiries after truth, their humble and zealous efforts to obtain holiness of life, their confidence in the doctrines and promises of Christ, and their serious concern for their eternal welfare?

Your last quotation is from St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians. "If any man preach any other Gospel unto

wicked men, who wished to be thought religious, but who rejected the authority of Christ and the apostles. No such, he continues, are found among christians of the present day, for they all revere the authority of the apostles, however they may depart from their doctrines. Signantur mali homines, qui pii videri volebant, etc. *Vid. Cleri. Adnotat. in Loc.*

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you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed."* This text was directed against a particular class of persons, who, the apostle observes in the same connexion, "would *pervert* the gospel of Christ." These persons, we learn from the whole epistle to the Galatians, were Judaizing christians, who were not simply betrayed into mistakes respecting the christian faith, but desired to impose the laws of Moses on all the converts, and to keep up the distinctions, which had always existed between the Jews and Gentiles. They knew this was contrary to the truth and spirit of christianity, because an inspired apostle had told them so, yet their pride and overbearing temper carried them forward in defiance of conscience and a better knowledge. In short, their wicked propensities, and obstinate disobedience of the plain, practical rules of the religion they professed, and not the errors of their belief, drew down upon them the severe censure in the text. The apostle uses bold and confident language, and he gives a good reason. He was "taught by the revelation of Jesus Christ." When calvinists can prove the same in regard to themselves, it will become them to be equally confident, and I apprehend little hazard in predicting, that every unitarian will then humbly submit to their authority.

Such are the proofs you bring from scripture, that in the charges of heresy, and of immorality as the consequence of dangerous opinions, you were only acting "in conformity with the example, both of the Master, and his inspired servants." What I have said is enough to show how far this example bears you out. I cannot close, however, without expressing my astonishment at

* Galatians i. 9.

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the position you assumed in resorting to this argument of defence. Is it possible, that you suppose yourself to have the same authority to judge and condemn the faith of others, as the Saviour and his Apostles? This must be taken for granted, otherwise you could not imagine that your appeal to their example would have any validity. This error runs through all your remarks. Positions are laid down as if they were dictated by some higher power. If you knew the hearts of men, like the Saviour, or were made acquainted with all divine truth, like the apostle Paul, such a thing would appear less strange. No knowledge short of this could qualify any one to follow their example in the instances, which you propose; and even then you would not have their example for judging the errors of men as crimes.

Unitarians consider charity an essential part of religion. They delight to think well of all men, who give the scripture test of a holy and blameless life. Articles of belief may exhibit themselves in an infinite variety of forms. They may deceive and mislead. Treachery may be concealed under fair pretences, falsehood may be entwined with the most solemn protestations, and deeds of the blackest die may lurk in the folds of a capacious faith. Holiness is single, always the same, and always to be seen. Unitarians make this the criterion of a truly religious character. They are told, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," but they are not told, that they must suffer this penalty, unless they believe in a particular dogma, which they cannot understand, but which the fond partiality of some devotee may desire to impose on them.

While they pray to have their minds enlightened, and humbly submit to the guiding counsels of the Almighty, they feel secure in his kind protection, and do

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not fear, that he will make their humility and confidence the instruments of their ruin. They have charity for all christians, who show themselves sincere, and whose religion shines out in the brightness of a good life. Piety and virtue are with them the convincing test of a saving faith, and those articles of belief, which produce these in the highest degree, and to the greatest extent, will have the largest portion of their charity. Whoever thinks this an evidence of the defective faith, and the immorality of unitarians, must be left to enjoy his opinion.

I shall next come to the last division of your Reply, and consider the serious charges, which you bring against the faith and morals of some of the distinguished English unitarians.

Yours,

A UNITARIAN OF BALTIMORE.

Religion to be understood.

WHATEVER God says, I am very ready to assent to it, for that very reason, *God hath said it.* But I must understand *what is said*, as well as be satisfied that the discovery came from God, before I can believe it as a divine revelation. The church of Rome says, "What! are you wiser than your fathers?" And they quote great names and many authorities. But protestants do not much regard such arguments against scripture and common sense. [Benson.

Christianity, as we understand it, contains no mysteries in the popular sense of that term. It inculcates no dark lessons, before the proud obscurity of which the

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human understanding must prostrate itself with servile humiliation, and indulge not a hope of penetrating farther. It has not, like the systems of ancient philosophy, one doctrine for those who are without, and another for those who are initiated. Abating for the figurative language of the times, the simplicity and reasonableness of the teaching of Jesus appear to me a most splendid characteristic. "Whatever renders religion more rational, renders it more credible;" and the understanding has revolted, and infidelity has been greatly produced and nourished by representations, which have made the gospel a most artificial, mysterious, and complicated scheme. That God has sent Jesus Christ into the world, with a special and authoritative commission, to disclose to men his paternal character and providence, to explain the principles of his moral government, to teach them their duty, to give a direct proof of a future life, and explicit assurance of a future moral retribution, these constitute the prominent features of the gospel; and these are principles, which are perfectly simple and intelligible; which, when understood and considered, commend themselves immediately to the reason and consciences of reflecting men. [Colman's Ordination Sermon.

Christ before all Things.

It is said of Christ in Colos. i. 17, "He is before all things." This text has been quoted as a proof of his being God. Such a conclusion is contradicted by what is said two verses preceding, where he is called the "image of the invisible God, the first born of every crea-

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ture." Could God be the image of himself, or can you say of God, that he is the first born of a creature? If you cannot, then this latter text proves Christ to be subordinate to the Father, and the former must not be allowed to have a contradictory meaning. This is agreeable to the tenor of scripture. He is called the Son of God, but he could not be the son of himself. He prayed to God, but he could not pray to himself. Hence it is evident, that the phrase, "all things," must be used in a limited sense, as where it is said, "one believeth he may eat *all things*," and in another place, "*all things* are lawful." Whatever dignity, therefore, this text implies in the character of Christ, it does not prove him to to be God; and the passage in connexion proves the contrary.

Charleston Unitarian Book Society.

[The following are the articles of a Society lately formed in Charleston, S. C. for the distribution of Books, preceded by an extract from the introductory remarks, explaining the views and motives of the Society. We are glad to find such means adopting in different parts of our country, as seem best calculated to diffuse a knowledge of our faith, and the benefits of our principles.]

In the books of Jewish Theology, it is recorded, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, did thus personally announce his unity, and paternity,—I, *even* I, *am God. That is* my *name, and* my *glory will* I *not give to another. Before* me *was no God formed; neither shall there be after* me. *There is no God but* me. From these writings, it was furthermore declared by him who came to overthrow the dominion of error,

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—*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and* HIM ONLY. He and his apostles practically exemplified this precept; which, as a fundamental article of faith, they publicly taught from city to city. In almost every page of the christian Scriptures, we find it distinctively inscribed. Paul, in an epistle to Timothy, whom he had ordained a gospel minister, thus epitomises its doctrines. *There is but one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* Under this summary, he professed to include *the whole counsel of God,* and therefore, urged the *giving thanks always for all things to God, even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* May it not be pertinently asked, if such was pure and undefiled religion then, why is it not so now? Has it undergone a subsequent modification? By what paradox do they, who are wise above that which is written, pretend, that in offering the sacrifice of praise to God, in the name of Jesus, our advocate with him, we at the same time worship Jesus as the God, with whom, by his intermediate agency, *he ever liveth to make intercession?* If phraseology so express can by any inference convey a meaning it literally disclaims, what legimate conclusion could be ever deduced from human language?

They, who, by conforming to the creeds and ceremonials of some predominant sect, claim for themselves the name of Orthodox Believers, are but too prone to decry as heretics and schismatics, all who do not accord with them in their favourite offices. But by whatever style, or title, such professors may designate other christians, we avow ourselves unitarians; and as the only proper object of religious homage, laud, and invoke that eternal, immutable, and stupendous Majesty, whom no eye hath seen, nor can see. We believe the

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predicted hour has arrived, and *now is, when true worshippers shall worship* THE FATHER *in spirit, and in truth.* Under these solemn convictions, several of the inhabitants of the city of Charleston, friendly to what they conceive to be the cause of rational and liberal christianity, have formed themselves into a society for the distribution of books, and adopted the following

Articles of Association.

ARTICLE I. This Association shall be denominated the Charleston Unitarian Society for the distribution of Books.

ART. II. The books distributed by this Society, shall be such only as are adapted to subserve the cause of rational and liberal christianity; to promote a correct faith, and a holy practice.

ART. III. Any person, on paying the sum of two dollars, may become a member of the Society, and be entitled to vote for officers. All subscriptions shall in future become due on the first day of June, annually, and every member shall be considered an annual subscriber for the same sum, until he shall have given notice to the secretary that he wishes to withdraw from the Society.

ART. IV. Nine Managers shall be chosen annually to superintend the concerns of the Society; who shall appoint from among their own number a President and Secretary, who shall likewise perform the duties of Librarian and Treasurer; and these managers shall have power to fill all vacancies, that may occur in their own body during the period for which they are chosen.

ART. V. A general meeting of the Society shall be held at the Independent Church, in Archdale Street, on the third Sunday in May, annually. At this meeting, a report of the managers shall be made, giving an account of their transactions during the past year, the state of the funds, and the amount of books on hand. New managers shall also be chosen. Of this meeting, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to give due notice.

ART. VI. The funds of the Society shall be employed in purchasing or printing such books as the managers shall select, or approve; and each member shall be entitled to receive, on application to the librarian, his due proportion of the books so procured.

ART. VII. Meetings of the managers shall be held on the first Monday in January, April, July, and October; and the President, or, in his absence, any three of the managers, shall be empowered to

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call a meeting of the board, whenever he or they may deem it expedient; and at such meetings, three members shall be sufficient to constitute a quorum.

Art. VIII. Proper measures shall be adopted by the managers to establish such a correspondence as shall tend to promote the designs of the Society.

Art. IX. All books presented or bequeathed to the Society, and likewise all books purchased, or printed, by order of the managers, and which shall not be called for by the subscribers within three months, shall be at the disposal of the Managers.

Art. X. The foregoing rules shall not be altered, nor any new rules adopted, otherwise than by a majority of two thirds of the members present at a meeting convoked for this specific purpose.

Theological Seminaries.

It has been voted by the Episcopal Convention recently assembled at Philadelphia, that the Seminary shall be removed from New Haven, and united with a similar establishment in New York. This arrangement was made in consequence of a large donation to the Seminary on condition of its being situated in New York. It is not to be in the city, but in some part of the state.

A Theological Seminary has lately been established at Auburn, N. Y. under the direction of three Professors, namely, Rev. Matthew R. Perrin, D. D. Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government; Rev. Henry Mills, Professor of Biblical Criticism and Oriental Literature; Rev. Dyric C. Lansing, Professor of Sacred Rhetoric. Accommodations are furnished to commence with twenty or thirty young men.

The German Lutheran Church has funds accumulating for the establishment of a Theological Institution.

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Dr. Chauncy a Unitarian.

Boston, Oct. 25.

SIR,

In the ninth number of the Unitarian Miscellany I observed Dr. Chauncy's name classed with those of trinitarians. Having doubts on this subject, I inquired respecting the fact of a gentleman, who was ten years a deacon of Dr. Chauncy's church, and he informed me that he was not a trinitarian. This can be relied on, as the gentleman here referred to was an intimate friend and warm admirer of Dr. Chauncy, and himself a unitarian. O.

Ordinations.

The Rev. RICHARD M. HODGES, from the Theological School at Harvard University, was ordained in Bridgwater, Mass. on the 12th of September. Services by the Rev. Mr. Sanger of Dover; Rev. Mr. Lowell of Boston; Rev. Dr. Harris of Dorchester; Rev. Mr. Briggs of Lexington; Rev. Mr. Palfrey of Boston.

The REV. BENJAMIN FESSENDEN, from Harvard University, was ordained over the society in East Bridgwater on the 19th of September. Services by the Rev. Mr. Ware of Boston; Rev. Mr. Clark of Norton; Rev. Dr. Ware of Cambridge; Rev. Mr. Kendall of Plymouth.

On the 20th of September, the REV. JAMES FLINT was installed in Salem, Mass. as successor to the late Dr. Bentley. Services by the Rev. Mr. Flint of Cohasset; Rev. Mr. Colman; Rev. Dr. Harris of Dorchester; Rev. Dr. Prince and Rev. Mr. Brazer of Salem; Rev. Mr. Bartlett, of Marblehead.

To Subscribers.

With the present number of the Miscellany, we send out the second edition of the third number. Should any of our subscribers not have received the three first numbers, we request them to give notice to the Secretary of the Baltimore Unitarian Book Society, and they will be immediately supplied. The other numbers of the first volume will be reprinted as expeditiously as possible.

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BY

F. LUCAS, Jr. & N. G. MAXWELL;

A

REVIEW

OF THE

HARTLAND REPORT

ON THE

APPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC LANDS

FOR

SCHOOLS.

Endorsing and reported to the Senate of Maryland, Jan. 30, 1851, by V. Mayer, Chairman of the Committee on Education and Public Instruction.

Price 25 cents.

Also as above,

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

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PROSPECTUS.

The principal object proposed in the present work, is to set forth the doctrines, and inculcate the truths of the christian religion, as they are usually understood by Unitarians. It is published monthly, in numbers, each number containing not less than thirty-six pages.

The annual price to subscribers is *one dollar and fifty cents*, payable on the first of May.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

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CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

No. XIII.] JANUARY, 1822. [Vol. II.

Knowledge of the Scriptures.

In the number of the Miscellany for September were offered a few remarks upon a translation of the Bible. No one can doubt, that a better translation of the sacred writings might be given, than the one in common use. But a new version is only a small part of what is wanted. The christian community ought to have more definite and rational notions about the Scriptures themselves. With the views, which at present prevail, the most perfect translation would be exposed to great abuses; for it would be impossible to make one, which should at once convey to readers of the present day the same ideas, that were received by the persons, to whom these writings were first addressed.

There is prevalent a confused notion of something supernatural in the composition of the sacred Scriptures, which forbids us to examine them as we do other writings. An air of mystery and awfulness is thrown around them. Many persons open the Bible with feelings, such as we may conceive to have gone along with a Jew into the temple of Solomon. Believing that this volume is the word of God, that the sacred penmen wrote as they were commanded by the Holy Spirit, that they de-

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clare the will of the Most High, and record the signs and wonders which he has wrought, and proclaim the promises of salvation, and the means of obtaining it, they open the volume and peruse its contents, without presuming to investigate their meaning. They seem to hold in even greater veneration what is obscure and unintelligible, and to suppose that, as the holy of holies was hidden by the veil of the temple, so some truths of vital importance are concealed from us by the veil of mystery, which it would be equal sacrilege to attempt to remove.

When we urge a more thorough investigation of these writings, we are reminded, that all scripture is given by inspiration, and the Bible contains what the Almighty has been pleased to communicate to men; that his ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts; that there is much in the Bible which, men must not expect to comprehend with their feeble faculties; that what may be obscure and unintelligible affords an opportunity for the exercise of faith, and checks the pride of human learning. This may sound well, but is it good sense? If the Almighty has condescended to make any communications to men, it is presumable they were made to be understood. Although, therefore, every syllable in the Bible be the dictate of inspiration, yet if dictated for the use of man, every syllable would have been originally intelligible to man. And we must look for some other cause of the obscurities and difficulties to be met with in the sacred volume, than the original intention of the authors.

At this distant time, it is very natural that we should meet with many things hard to be understood in writings, composed the earliest of them more than three

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thousand, and the latest nearly two thousand years ago, in languages no longer spoken, in countries far distant from our own, among a people whose manners and customs were very different from any with which we are conversant. Much learning and much critical acumen are requisite to understand these writings thoroughly. That the authors were miraculously assisted is no ground of objection to the science of biblical criticism; for it is irrational, it is even impious to suppose, that God would interpose a miracle to throw obscurity into writings designed for the instruction of mankind.

It is a truth very offensive to many, that the correct interpretation of scripture is attended with great difficulties. Since the Bible was written for the instruction of mankind, they are unwilling to believe that extensive acquisitions, patient research, and an application of principles deduced from a deep inquiry into the nature of language, are necessary to discover the true meaning of many parts. They are more ready to believe, that much is concealed by the veil intentionally drawn around the unsearchable things of God. This volume, say they, was given for our instruction and edification, to teach us what the Lord requires of us. It is the law of God, and how can we obey it, if so much learning be indispensable to understand it? To such I would say, the laws of the land are promulgated as binding upon every one, yet how very small a portion of the community have leisure or ability to acquaint themselves with the whole code; and how much learning has been expended by the wise, in explaining the principles upon which it was formed, resolving the difficulties and showing the meaning and application of its parts? No one, however, incurs the penalties of the law from ignorance of his duty, nor complains that

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he cannot be a good citizen, because he is not a skilful jurist. The civil and divine laws are in this respect similar. The latter, like the former, are embarrassed with difficulties, which men will perhaps never be able to resolve; but as in the former, so in the latter, there is sufficient that is plain, which every man may make the guide of his actions. The character of the Deity, our entire dependence upon him, our accountability, the doctrine of a future state of righteous retribution made known by Jesus Christ, and the necessity of a life of repentance, virtue, and holiness, are taught with perfect plainness, and are all, a knowledge of which is essential to right conduct, and the divine acceptance.

Every one professing to be a christian ought to search the Scriptures diligently, for they contain what is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." All the great practical truths of our religion are indeed taught with the utmost perspicuity. They are upon the very face of scripture, and are not made the subject of controversy; but the distinguishing doctrines of the sects, into which christians are divided, rest upon comparatively a few doubtful passages and words; they are deduced from the figurative and allusive language so common in the Bible. In defence of these the passions of men have been enlisted, and they have made the sacred volume "a common arsenal, if I may use the expression," says a French writer, "to which theological combatants go and arm themselves as they please." They open it with all their prejudices on the alert, and wresting detached passages from their proper connexion, appropriate them to the support of systems of doctrine, which have been formed ages since the Scriptures were made.

If it were generally known how difficult it is to as-

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certain precisely the meaning of many parts of scripture, particularly those which have been the subjects of controversy, there would be fewer disputers and more would consent to be learners. Men would be less pertinacious in defence of their own views, and more charitable towards those, who differ from them in opinion. On almost every page of the sacred volume we, of the present day, may meet obscure figures and allusions which would have been readily understood by a contemporary reader; references to historical facts, or to traditions which are now lost, or to local incidents which never were recorded; allusions to customs of which we can have but a very imperfect idea, and references to scenes, places and countries which are known to very few, who now read the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. "The Bible is no one summary of doctrine regularly digested, in which a man could not mistake his way; it is a most venerable but most multifarious collection of the records of the divine economy, a collection of an infinite variety, of cosmogony, theology, history, prophecy, psalmody, morality, apologue, allegory, legislation, ethics, carried through different books, by different authors, at different ages, for different ends and purposes. It is necessary to sort out what was intended for example, what only as narrative, what to be understood figuratively, what literally, where one precept is to be controlled and modified by another, what is used directly, and what only as an argument ad hominem, what is temporary and what of perpetual obligation, what appropriated to one state and set of men, and what the general duty of all men in all ages." To understand what we call obscure parts of the Scriptures, much knowledge on these topics is necessary.

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It is impossible at the present day, perhaps, to obtain all the knowledge that is desirable. We can never, for instance, become so familiar with the Jewish religion, and its cumbrous ritual, as to perceive, readily, the force of the allusions to them, which are so often to be met with. Nor with regard to the Epistles of the New Testament, can we expect to know exactly the occasions upon which they were written, the state of the churches to which they were addressed, the disputes which they seem designed to reconcile, or the errors they aim to correct. But very much of this knowledge is indispensable to a complete biblical scholar, and ought to be possessed by every one, who presumes to declare with authority what is, and what is not, the true meaning of difficult passages. But all this knowledge is not requisite to the character of a sincere christian; for it is not "a very learned, nor a very subtle, nor a very ingenious thing, to be a good christian;" but it is, to be a competent expositor of the Bible.*

* The following remarks of Jortin are peculiarly just, and, in the usual spirit of that excellent and learned man. "If Jeremy Taylor, and Tillotson, and Erasmus, and Chillingworth, and John Hales, and Locke, and Episcopius, and Grotius, and many who shall not be named, had been contemporaries, and had met together *freely* to determine the important question, *What makes a man a christian*, and *what profession of faith should be deemed sufficient*, they would probably have agreed, notwithstanding the diversity of opinions which they might all have had on some theological points. There have been others, indeed, who, on such an occasion, would have given us an ample catalogue of *necessaries*, the inference from which would have been, that it must needs be a very learned, and a very subtle, and a very ingenious thing to be a good christian; for some of these *necessaries* are of so refined a nature, that the understanding can hardly lay hold of them, or the memory retain them." *Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Preface, p. 23.*

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But let not the unlearned christian be alarmed, lest his salvation is to depend upon possessing, what few have opportunity to acquire. He is bound only to improve his opportunities; he is not answerable for talents with which he has never been intrusted. Almost every thing Jesus Christ said is within the comprehension of the most ordinary capacity; and one of the best reasons which can be given for the faith we profess, is, that we conceive it to be plainly taught by our Saviour. Let every one search the Scriptures diligently, assured that he is accountable only for the fidelity of his search, and not for the correctness of the result. As Jeremy Taylor has observed, it is not required of us, that we never be in error, but that we do our best to avoid it. We need tremble only at the denunciations of heaven, and they were never uttered against error of faith, but error of practice. M.

Theological Repertory on the Sentiments of Locke.

In a late number of the Theological Repertory, an Episcopalian work published at Washington, an article has appeared, entitled, *A Vindication of Mr. Locke's Views respecting the Trinity.* It is introduced by the following preamble.

"The authority of great names in religion, however destitute of intrinsic weight, is often employed with deadly effect in the cause of error; and is susceptible of a very useful application on the side of truth. Its legitimate use is doubtless to *excite* to a due inquiry, and not to confirm the truth of disputed doctrines. When the suffrage of distinguished characters, borne during their lives, in favour of christianity, or any of its fundamental tenets, is not only denied, but claimed in support of heresy; it is the dictate of justice to their memory,

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and an important duty to posterity, to assert the advantage of which the cause of truth is thus surreptitiously deprived. In this sentiment we cheerfully insert the following communication, which contains a very full and satisfactory vindication of the celebrated Locke, from the frequent, and, we believe, most injurious charge of Socinianism, which the abettors of that scheme have unceremoniously alleged against him."

Now as we rely exclusively on the instructions of the Saviour and his apostles, for the accuracy and strength of our faith, we have no very exalted reverence for human authority in the concerns of religion, by whatever great names it may be supported. No man is to be answerable for us at the bar of God; and in the deep and eternal interests of the soul, we feel it a duty of the most serious kind to search only at the fountain of truth, guided by such light as God in his mercy shall grant to our prayers. Give us the Bible, and we ask no more. It is doubtless gratifying to find that men distinguished for talents, learning, probity, candour, piety, have drawn the same conclusions from the word of God as ourselves; yet he is greatly culpable, who makes these of any account in deciding his faith, when he has before him the christian's noblest inheritance, the sacred Scriptures. Unitarians refer to great names not so much to confirm their sentiments, as to present some motives of charity to their brethren, who are fond of decrying them as heretics, and thus exciting a wicked disposition in the ignorant and unwary, against persons of whose characters they know nothing. If great, and good, and honest, and pious men have been unitarians, it is no feeble evidence that unitarians may be good, and honest, and pious at the present day. This may at all events be admitted, till the contrary is proved by their conduct.

The above extract shows in a particular manner, with

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what spirit worthy christians can find it in their hearts to write, when their zeal gains the ascendency over their judgment, and sectarian prepossessions are suffered to usurp the place of christian liberality, and to shut the heart against the divine precept of rendering to others what they should desire to receive from them. For we suppose the editors would not consider it a high mark of civility, or of a christian temper, to be charged with employing great names "with deadly effect in the cause of error," or "claiming them in the support of heresy;" and however their charity might induce them to seek for palliations of such charges, it is presumed they would not be able to detect in them much humility, brotherly love, or depth of piety.

What we have to add is designed to acquaint our readers with the means, to which some persons can prevail on themselves to resort, in establishing a favourite position. It is the object of the article before us to prove, by quotations from the works of Locke, that he was a trinitarian. As this was a novel undertaking, which no one, we believe, has ever before attempted, it would be natural to expect the most scrupulous exactness in quoting the words of the author. By one or two examples, let us see with what fidelity this attempt has been prosecuted.

Locke wrote his *Reasonableness of Christianity* to prove, that one article of faith sincerely received was sufficient to confer on any person the title of christian, namely, that Jesus was the Messiah. This, he contended, was the only fundamental article. For thus simplifying the christian faith, he was charged with divesting it of many articles, which are absolutely essential; yet the writer, who brought against him this charge, acknowledged that Philip, when he baptized the man of Ethiopia,

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required him to express a belief only, that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. The writer quotes Locke as speaking on this occasion in the following language.

"If I am a socinian for saying that that proposition is the only one required previously to be believed by a convert, and you acknowledge, that the confession of the eunuch was enough for his admittance into the church of Christ, you must acknowledge, that even the doctrine of the *Holy Trinity* (the very words of Locke) was not thought by Philip a fundamental doctrine."*

With this, let the *true* words of Locke, as contained below, be compared.

"But nevertheless he had, by allowing the eunuch's confession of faith sufficient for his admittance as a member of Christ's church, given up his other fundamentals as necessary to be believed to make a man a christian; even that of the Holy Trinity; and he has at last reduced his necessary articles to these two, namely, 'That Jesus is the Messiah,' and that 'Jesus is the Son of God.†' "

From this comparison it will be perceived, that the language of Locke is not merely mangled and perverted, but that the whole paragraph is almost literally coined anew; and what renders the forgery still more reprehensible, the writer, seemingly conscious of his dishonest artifice, asserts, in addition to his marks of quotation, in bold defiance of truth, that he was giving *the very words of Locke.*

We hasten to another example. The following extract we present exactly as it is printed in the article under consideration, where it is professed to be given as the precise language of Locke.

"First, John the Baptist tells them, '*the kingdom of God* is at hand,' a name by which the Jews called the *Kingdom of the Messiah.* Then our Saviour comes and tells them 'of the *Kingdom of God.*'

* The vindicator quotes, as he tells us, from the fourth edition of Locke's Works. The present passage is referred to the *Second Vindication, p.* 697.

† Locke's Works, eleventh edition, vol. vii. p. 372.

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Then come the apostles and evangelists after his death, and expressly teach that Jesus was the Messiah; that the words Son of God, meant *Messiah*. What then do the Scriptures show clearly, beyond all contradiction, that the words, Son of God, meant, when used by our Saviour, and as understood by the Jews? In the 5th chapter of John, our blessed Lord, in speaking to the Jews, claims God to be his *Father*. See 17th verse. The Evangelist adds, in verse 18th, 'that the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, (as they pretended to think,) but said also that God *was his Father, making himself equal* with *God*.' Jesus, instead of correcting this interpretation of his words, tells these very Jews, that all men should honour the *Son even* (or in like manner,) as they honour the Father.' In the 9th chapter of the same Gospel, from the 34th verse to the 38th, a Jew whom Jesus had healed, instantly puts the same construction on his declaration, that he was the *Son of God* and *worshipped* him."*

Compare with this the parallel passage faithfully quoted from Locke.

"First, John the Baptist tells them, 'The kingdom of God' (a name by which the Jews called the kingdom of the Messiah) 'is at hand.' Then our Saviour comes, and he tells them of 'the kingdom of God;' *sometimes that it is at hand, and upon some occasions, that it is come; but he says, in his public preaching, little or nothing of himself.* Then come the apostles and evangelists, after his death, and they, in express words, teach *what his birth, life and doctrine had done before, and had prepared the well disposed to receive, namely*, that 'Jesus is the Messiah.'"†

Here it will be observed, that the words in italics are left out of the pretended quotation. The remainder, which is presented as a continuation of the preceding part, is not to be found in the whole of Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, and must have been fabricated to suit the vindicator's purpose. We trust no remarks

* *Reasonableness of Christianity, p.* 546, as quoted by the vindicator.

† Locke's Works, vol. vii. *Reasonableness of Christianity, p.* 82.

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are necessary to exhibit these facts in a clearer light; and we are sure a more powerful argument of the weakness of a cause cannot be advanced, than that such means should be employed in its support. Several other instances might be adduced containing deviations from the original, but none, perhaps, with such glaring perversions as these.

We make one more extract, as expressing the sentiments of the writer, and of the editors of the Washington Theological Repertory, respecting the views, purposes, and conduct of the persons with whose religious concerns they have thought it their duty to intermeddle.

"Unitarians," say they, "are forced, by the plain declarations of our Saviour, and the evident understanding of them by the Jews, either to expunge passages of the Scriptures, or interpolate words, or misconstrue them against all evidence, authority, common sense, and grammar. And yet they tell mankind, that they take the Scriptures as the only rule of their faith and conduct."

We have long ago ceased to be surprised at any thing our adversaries can say. The repeated trials, which we have been called to endure, have prepared us to listen very cooly and philosophically to such language as the above, although it is an impeachment against our honesty, sincerity, moral principles, religious sensibility, and indeed every quality, which can give value to character, stability to faith, or hope in the prospects of eternity. Now as we suppose these editors to be rational men, we ask them by what possible motives they can imagine we should be induced to have the folly, the infatuation, the madness to pursue the course, which they describe? They must either consider us absolutely out of our senses, or moved by inducements, which have never before been known to actuate any human being. Why should we profess "to take the Scriptures as the only

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rule of faith and practice," unless we desire to receive the Scriptures in their truth and purity? The rule, which they afford, we believe to be the way of eternal life, the means of holiness, and the guide to heaven. On what principles of human nature can these gentlemen prove, even to their own satisfaction, that any rational man would obstinately engage in a work, which he knew must terminate in deceiving himself, in filling his mind with delusions, debasing his highest faculties, incurring the just displeasure of a holy God, and putting to a most fearful hazard the salvation of his soul? The notion is as preposterous, as the charges springing out of it are unjustifiable and illiberal.*

We beg permission also to ask these gentlemen further, by what authority they have engaged in the service of uttering censures against unitarians? Are they encouraged by the command of the Saviour, "Judge not, that ye be not judged;" or do they act in conformity with the words of the apostle, "Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth?" If these are the rules by which they are guided, why may we not exercise the same christian privilege, and retort their charges upon them.

* The passage above quoted, reminds us of one written in a similar spirit by the famous Jones, of Nayland, whose book on the trinity is so popular among the illiterate and uninformed, who are unable to detect his sophistry and false criticism, and among some of the more learned, who are contented with his results, without caring to trouble themselves about his logic. In speaking of the change, which took place in the opinions of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, he adds the charitable clause,—"And to put the best face he could on his unbelief, he spent much of the remainder of his life in writing ambiguous comments, and finding various readings, that is, in picking holes in the Bible." *Jones's Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, New York,* 1813, *p.* 169.

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selves, and solemnly acquaint the world with their insidious attempts to "misconstrue the Scriptures against all evidence, authority, common sense, and grammar?" If the religion of the Redeemer will indulge them in the license of inflicting this abuse on the integrity, the conscience, and the christian feelings of their brethren, why will it not allow us and others the same indulgence? And suppose all christians to take this liberty, and to cherish the bitter spirit with which its exercise must necessarily be connected, and to reiterate the above charges against such as differ from them, we ask again, whether we should be encouraged to expect from the conduct of christians the fruits of a rational faith, an humble, subdued temper, a righteous practice, and sincere piety?*

In regard to the main point of the article, which we have been examining, it will of course be taken for granted, that the writer has completely failed in his object, after having witnessed the above specimens of his mode of conducting his argument. If Locke's writings prove him to have been a trinitarian, why was it necessary to misquote and fabricate. One plain declaration would

* In a letter, which Dr. Doddridge once wrote to a person, who had been guilty of rash and ungenerous insinuations respecting some of his religious sentiments, he expressed himself as follows. "Are you sure, Sir, that I am not intending the honour of God and the good of souls, by my various labours of one kind or another—so sure of it, that you will venture to maintain it before the throne of God, and the bar of Christ, that I was a person whom it was your duty to endeavour to discredit?" We put the same question to those, who are so ready to disparage the faith of unitarians, to misinterpret their motives, and fix a stigma upon their characters. Are they prepared to testify at the bar of God, that they act on a full knowledge of facts, that they know the hearts of their brethren, and feel that they have a commission from heaven to impeach, judge, and condemn? Let them answer to their consciences, as in the presence of God.

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be sufficient. Why not bring this declaration? The truth is, unitarians receive most cordially *every sentence*, which the writer has accurately quoted, respecting the trinity, from the works of Locke. If in this article, Locke is proved to be a trinitarian, all unitarians are proved to be such.

In closing this notice, we hope we shall be pardoned for obtruding a word of advice on the attention of the editors, which is, that, before they come forward again in "vindication" of Locke, they will have the patience to read his first *Letter on Toleration;* and that before they attempt again to prove him a trinitarian, they will do themselves the justice to look into his *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of Paul.*

Covenant of Redemption.

Few things are more remarkable in the high orthodox scheme, than the notion of the covenants, and especially the compact, which is represented to have been made between the Father and the Son. The advocates for this compact suppose the Deity to have resolved, long before the worlds were made, to create men in such a way, that they must become rebels against his moral government, and subject themselves to the consuming flames of his anger. God is represented to have foreseen from all eternity the wicked apostacy of man, and at the same time to have determined to create him, and leave him to perish in his iniquities, had not the Son, who is considered a being equal in all respects with the Father, voluntarily offered to suffer in his behalf, and thus to rescue an elect and specified number from the ruin, which the Father had decreed they should all deserve. This

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amazing condescension of the Son in leaving the Father's glory, and the abodes of bliss, to execute so painful a mission, to appease the wrath and satisfy the justice of God, was to be rewarded by having those, whom he thus purchased, for his inheritance, the subjects of his kingdom. This supposed agreement between the Father and Son is called the covenant of grace, or the covenant of redemption.*

The following objections, amongst many others, rest against this scheme.

First, it is not revealed. Witsius, who has examined the Scriptures faithfully in regard to this subject, has advanced no direct proof. He gives forced and unnatural meanings to passages, many of which are in themselves obscure, and whose obvious application has no bearing on the doctrine he aims to support. He tells us, for example, that this compact is mentioned in the words of Christ, and quotes the following text. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my

* No one, probably, has gone so deeply into this subject, or condescended to give the world so much information about it, as the celebrated Flavel in his *Sermon on the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Redeemer*. He makes known to us, that "Christ, having told God how ready and fit he was for his service, he will know of him what reward he shall have for his work; for he resolves his blood shall not be sold at low and cheap rates. Hereupon (Isaiah xlix. 3) the Father offers him the elect of Israel for his reward, bidding low at first, as they that make bargains use to do, and only offers him that small remnant, still intending to bid higher. But Christ will not be satisfied with these; he values his blood higher than so; therefore in verse fourth, he is brought in complaining, *I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought;* this is but a small reward for so great a suffering as I must undergo; my blood is much more worth than this comes to, and will be sufficient to redeem all the elect dispersed among the isles of the Gentiles. Hereupon the Father comes up higher, and tells him, he intends to reward him better than so, and

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Father hath appointed unto me." By which it is meant, says Witsius, that "by virtue of some covenant he obtains a kingdom, and we also obtain it by virtue of the same." Neither the force nor propriety of this conclusion is obvious. In his other quotations he is not more successful.

Secondly, this covenant scheme represents God as a being, filled with anger and enmity against his creatures, whom he has formed according to his own will, and so formed, that they must necessarily incur his displeasure, and render themselves worthy of his highest indignation. It makes him a cruel being, and cruel without motive. Now we are not taught in the scriptures to form such conceptions of our heavenly Father. We are taught to believe, that the foundation of his throne is justice and mercy, that it is not his will that any should perish, but that all should come to a knowledge of him and be saved.

Thirdly, this scheme takes away the sinner's hope of pardon on condition of repentance and obedience.

therefore," &c. See further extracts in the *Christian Disciple, New Series*, No. 11.

Herman Witsius has written a book on the covenants, which contains two long chapters on the *Compact between God the Father and the Son.* The commencement of this compact he tells us "is to be sought in the eternal counsel of the adorable Trinity, in which the Son of God was constituted by the Father, with the approbation of the Holy Spirit, the Saviour of mankind, on this condition, that in the fullness of time, he should be made of a woman, and made under the law; which the Son undertook to perform." *See Economy of the Covenants*, p. 242.

How Flavel and Witsius became so well acquainted with these particulars, as they have not told us, it would be equally useless and profane to inquire. It is the duty of every one, however, to take care how he sacrifices the imposing sense of scripture to imaginations so vivid and erratic.

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Why is he told to repent and turn to God, if there be no virtue in these acts? But surely there can be none, if the full price of our sins is already paid, and the gate of heaven has been opened through the condescension and sufferings of one, who has made a satisfaction for all the iniquities of men. Why should we repent, if the stains of our wicked deeds have been removed in consequence of a covenant made in our behalf, which can never be abrogated, till its objects are fully accomplished? Why is the question asked, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Why are we commanded to love God, to love our neighbours, to refrain from sin, and to do good? Why are we threatened with punishment for disobedience? These things are not consistent with the notion, that all the requisitions of our Maker have been satisfied by the compliance of another being with the conditions of a covenant made before the foundation of the world. And unless they are satisfied, what is the strength, or efficacy, of the supposed covenant? It was for this purpose only for which it is understood to have been made.

Fourthly, this plan goes upon the supposition that there were from eternity two beings equally perfect, the Father and the Son. This is contrary to scripture and reason. For no truth is urged more constantly in the Scriptures, than that there is but one God; and no truth is more obvious in nature. If there be two beings in all respects equal, and one of them is God, the other must likewise be God; that is, there will be two Gods. This difficulty is met by supposing, that the Father and Son are at the same time two beings and one being. But, setting aside the impossibility and contradiction, which such a notion involves, it would seem rather to increase

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than remove the difficulty in the present case. There can be no covenant, where there is but one being. And, moreover, it must be inferred from this plan, that God himself came down upon the earth, and suffered for the sins of his creatures. But there is a degree of irreverence, we may say indeed profaneness, in this supposition, which must shock and distress every pious mind.

To remove the evils and wickedness of so strange a consequence, it is said, that the Son himself consisted of two beings, one of which was God, and the other man, and that it was the man only who suffered. It is, nevertheless, affirmed, that the cause of his suffering was an infinite evil, and this is one reason given why it was necessary for Christ to be the supreme God. Here, then, are several contending difficulties. As man, Christ could not suffer for an infinite evil; as God, he could not suffer at all. If the covenant was made with him in his human nature, it was one with which he could not comply; if in his divine nature, it was made by one party only, and could in no sense be a covenant.*

In short, this subject runs into so many inconsistencies, that it is not possible to reason about it. We are first told of two beings infinitely and equally perfect, who made a covenant together for the salvation of men. It would then seem, that these two beings are one and the same being, and of course that this being makes a covenant with himself. He must suffer according to the conditions of the covenant; but God cannot suffer. It follows, that the being, who suffers, must be both God and man; and that he suffers, not as God, but as man. That is, the being who suffers, is not the one who made the covenant, for this was God himself;

* For some excellent remarks on this subject, see *Emlyn's Answer to Leslie, on the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, Sec.* 5.

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nor are his sufferings adequate to the object, which they are supposed to attain; for none but an infinite being could remove an infinite evil.*

How much better, than this labyrinth of mysteries, is the plain way of attaining salvation, which is taught in the Scriptures? Piety unfeigned, holiness of life, purity of heart, submission of will, humility, and mildness of temper, are intelligible practical doctrines. The religious duties of social life, charity, benevolence, kindness, may be comprehended and followed. We may impose restraints upon ourselves, be temperate, cheerful, forbearing. We may serve God with our whole soul, mind, heart, and strength; we may live soberly, righteously, piously; we may obey the words and walk in the footsteps of Christ; we may repent of our sins, look with contrition on our past offences, and do good where we have done evil before. Thus we may attain to the spirit, character, and hopes of christians; but if we value our souls, we shall beware how we become ensnared by the bewildering imaginations of men, which run into dark places, and seek out an easier access to the favour of God, than is gained by personal holiness, and a rigid observance of the divine laws.

* It is no wonder, that even a most zealous supporter of such a doctrine should affirm, "The satisfaction of Christ is an unaccountable irrational doctrine; destroys every natural idea we have of divine justice, and, lay aside the evidence of scripture, it is so far from being true, that it is ridiculous." *Bradbury's Sermons*, p. 39. See *Emlyn's Works*, vol. ii. p. 84.

This corresponds with Dr. South's remark on the identity of the Father and Son. "That any one," says Dr. South, "should be both Father and Son to the same person, produce himself, be cause and effect too, and so the copy give being to the original, seems at first sight so very strange and unaccountable, that were it not to be adored as a *mystery*, it would be exploded as a *contradiction*." *Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 140. *Lond.* 1718.

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Toleration in New York.

On a trial for blasphemy before the Recorder in the city of New York, we find that the learned judge, "in his charge to the jury, instructed them, that although by the constitution every man in the country had a right to entertain any religious opinion, and all sects had free toleration in their respective modes of worship; though the Unitarian, Jew, Mahometan, and Pagan, remained here free from persecution, yet it was contrary to the principles of the common law for any man to revile the religion generally prevailing here, or its author; or to impeach or call in question the attributes of the Deity.—"While, on the one hand," the learned judge continues, "we say to Unitarians, Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans, *Enjoy your own religious notions free from restraint,* so on the other, we say, and such is the language of the law, *Revile not the religion which we profess, or its author.*" As a reason for this language of the law, he goes on to say, that "it is from religion that oaths in court derive their efficacy; and to undermine the religious opinions of men would deprive us of the security we place upon oaths in judicial proceedings and others, and would finally operate to the subversion of civil society."*

The words witnessed against the defendant were sufficiently blasphemous, but the learned judge said, considering the testimony adduced on his behalf—"the testimony of his good character, *and his peculiar religious opinion,* it was hardly possible, that he could have uttered the words laid in the indictment."

* New York City-Hall Reporter, vol. vi. 40.

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Of his peculiar religious opinion, it appeared in evidence that the defendant had often been heard to express his "conviction of the truth of the doctrine of universal salvation." It is only necessary to add in the history of the case, that he was acquitted.

The Reporter, at the head of the article alluded to, lays it down as the law, derived, probably, from the decisions of the learned judge in the case, that where it appeared that blasphemous words "were uttered in the course of an intemperate political dispute, by one who belonged to a church and frequented it, who had a sense of religious obligation, and otherwise sustained a fair character, it was held that he was not guilty." It is wonderful that it was not also given as a reason, why a man uttering blasphemous words should not be held guilty of blasphemy, that he was a man of good education, and moreover belonged to the prevailing political party. I will not undertake to say how far the part the defendant took in the political dispute, which gave occasion to the blasphemous words in question, mitigated his crime in the eyes of the learned judge and intelligent jury; but I am at a loss to conceive in what manner "a sense of religious obligation," or "belonging to a church," could absolve from the consequences of such a crime in a civil, any more than in a moral point of view.

My principal object, however, is not to question the correctness of the decision, or the law in this case, but to warn our friends of the First Congregational Society in New York, who may not have seen the report, of the dangerous ground on which they stand. It is not to be regretted, that not belonging to any *christian* church, they may not blaspheme, in the usual sense of the

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word, with impunity in this world, and we presume they do not expect, as the defendant in the present case, an unconditional acquittal in the next. But let them beware of calling Jesus Christ, in the language of Peter, "a man approved of God," for "in the language of the law" this would be blasphemy; it would be "to revile the author of the religion generally prevailing" in New York, which considers Christ, and commands us to worship him, as God. They must not call in question the underived existence, the almighty power, the eternity of Jesus Christ, since, by the same standard, this would be to impeach the attributes of the Deity himself. If they do not believe, they must not teach any thing in contradiction to the doctrine of universal salvation, of the Thirty Nine Articles, or the Assembly's Larger or Shorter Catechism, or other symbols of christian churches in this land of religious light and liberty, for this would be to "operate to the subversion of civil society." And let them no longer blame the angry polemic, or the bigoted professor, who denies them the name of christians, since they are, even from the bench of justice, in the very metropolis of our country, the seat of religion, of learning, and the arts, ranked with unbelievers, and assigned only a precedence in the enumeration with Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans.

Rev. Mr. Gilman's Sermon on the Church of Christ.

A SERMON has lately been published in Charleston, South Carolina, which was preached by the Rev. SAMUEL GILMAN, minister of the Second Independent Church in that city. This discourse was delivered on

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the day of the monthly communion, and was intended to give a concise, but comprehensive outline of the nature of the church of Christ. In alluding to the divisions among christians, and their different views of this subject, arising out of the different circumstances of time, place and education, Mr. Gilman proceeds as follows;

"But what is the Church? Ask this question at Rome, and you will receive in reply, the Church consists only of Roman Catholic cardinals, bishops, and other dignitaries, who derive their authority, power, and sacred influence from the papal head alone. Ask it in Germany, and you will hear that the Church is any where but in papal hands, and that its true residence lies in that body of worshippers, who subscribe to the doctrines and submit to the discipline established three or four hundred years since by Martin Luther. Ask it in Moscow, and you will find no other idea of a Church prevailing, or scarcely even conceivable there, except that great branch of Christians which in the eleventh century separated from the communion of Rome, and set up, at Constantinople, a new pope, new doctrines, new ceremonies, and a new worship. Ask it in England, and along with expressions of surprise at your ignorance, you will hear that the Church is a sacred branch of the constitution of the country, bearing date from the time of Henry, VIII. and exercising its religious ceremonies, discipline, and worship, as by law established. Ask it in Scotland, and you will there find the region of the Church confined within the limits of parish consistories, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies. Ask it in New England, and the general reply will be, the Church consists of those communicating members who belong to independent congregations. Ask it in any other general section of our country, and the reply will be modified according to the prevailing system of external worship among its inhabitants. Or ask it in the humblest and obscurest village in the land, and the information you obtain, will confine the Church to that sect which worships God beneath the little steeple erected by the few individuals, whom the common fortune of life has thrown together there."

After thus hinting at the differences among men, and proving that the question, *what is the church*, cannot be decided by appeals to human authority, the author confines himself to the word of God. From this sacred

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source it appears, that all true believers in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the son of God, divinely commissioned to publish the Father's will, teach the doctrines of righteousness, and set an example of holiness; all such believers constitute a part of the church of Christ. The author adds,

"The divine commission and authority of Jesus Christ must be professedly acknowledged and submitted to; habits of general obedience to his moral commands must be contracted, or at least sedulously aimed at; and the spirit which his gospel breathes must be cherished and rendered in some good degree operative on the heart and on the life.

"We will go no farther. We will draw no closer lines. We will make no more peremptory distinctions. We will no more multiply qualifications for the candidate for this consecrated body, this church of Christ. We will adopt no more exclusive language. We will entrust the visible church, and as we believe, without danger, to members of the foregoing description, and then we ask, where is this Church situated? Is it confined by geographical boundaries? Does it depend on the renowned leader of a party, the ingenious and controversial head of a sect? Is its operation constrained within little neighbourhoods? Are its testimonials merely creeds of man's invention? Is its existence limited to particular ages, and particular periods of time? Is its history connected with a few names which can be culled here and there from the dictionary of religions? Oh no, Nothing at all of this. The church of Christ, the *visible* church of Christ, is commensurate with the time that his name has been heard on earth, and with the region of space throughout which it has been and will be proclaimed. The seeds of the gospel, as they are wafted about on the four winds of heaven, fall without discrimination on those pure, gentle, virtuous, and faithful hearts, which are their appropriate soil.—

"Generations yet unborn shall be baptized in the name of Christ, shall sit at his table, and partake of his supper, shall receive him as the messenger of God, obey his commands, imbibe his spirit, and maintain his genuine and legitimate church on earth, through far, far distant ages hence, when the names of Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Independent Churches, shall only be known to the curious historian, or shall have sunk far down into the dark deep gulph of forgetfulness."

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It is the duty of all persons, who profess to be christians in faith, and aim to be such in practice, to join in celebrating the appointed ordinance of the Lord's Supper. It is the command of Christ. This makes it a duty. Its tendency is to keep alive in our remembrance the doctrines, life, sufferings, death and resurrection of the Saviour; confirm our pious convictions; promote a due love and gratitude to Christ; secure harmony, peace and good fellowship among christian brethren; and kindle the amiable virtues and kind affections within ourselves. Such are the purposes and uses of the ordinance; and these make it a duty. It is in fact a testimony of obedience, and a part of the means of holiness from which christians can with no more propriety excuse themselves, than from the exercises of devotion, the observance of the Sabbath, or a compliance with any of the rules of the gospel, which are designed to advance the great objects of the christian scheme. It is an ordinance in which every christian originally joined, and what was practised in the apostles' days, cannot be considered less important, or less obligatory at the present time.

Mr. Gilman concludes his discourse with a few appropriate and excellent remarks on the spirit of unity and love, which should influence christians as the disciples of Christ, or members of his church. We quote the following.

"The Church, the body of Christ, has indeed been too much distracted. Owing sometimes to deficiency of light and knowledge, and sometimes to the prevalence of prejudice and passion, that great body of men which has gone under the name of the Christian Church, has suffered innumerable external and nominal divisions. Disputes have harassed them; differences have estranged them; misunderstandings have parted them; yet amidst these clouds of error and mistake, we trust there have still prevailed some general principles of christian

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feeling in many hearts, which have tended to preserve the garment of the true Church without a seam. Have we not often heard from some meek, pious, good men, such language as the following; 'True, I cannot think with you. I have been educated in a different persuasion. Yet I will not, dare not, condemn you. I can only judge of you by your fruits. And as long as they are fair and unexceptionable, I have no right to torture you into my own opinion, nor to make your title to everlasting salvation and acceptance with God depend upon your seeing with my eyes, and interpreting scripture with my views. Brother, let me embrace you, for your heart is right."

When all christians will act on these principles, and preserve this temper, we shall hear much less of the alarm of heresy, and see much more of the genuine fruits of a pure faith, and of the doctrine according to godliness.

The present discourse we perceive is published under the patronage of the Charleston Unitarian Book Society. We are glad to find the efforts of a society, whose objects are so worthy, and whose means of usefulness are so extensive, employed in giving publicity to a discourse, which seems so well calculated to enlarge the bounds of liberal inquiry, and to scatter the seeds of piety, union, and love among christians.

Triad of the Hindoos.

Very respectable natives have assured me, that one or two missionaries have been absurd enough, in their zeal for the conversion of the Gentiles to urge, "that the Hindus were even now almost christians, because their Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesa were no other than the christian Trinity;" a sentence in which we can only doubt whether folly, ignorance, or impiety predominates. The three powers, *creative, preservative,* and *destruc-*

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tive, which the Hindus express by the triliteral word O'm, were grossly ascribed by the first idolaters to the *heat*, *light*, and *flame* of their mistaken divinity, the sun; and their wiser successors in the east, who perceived that the sun was only a created thing, applied those *powers* to its Creator; but the *Indian* Triad, and that of *Plato*, which he calls the Supreme Good, the Reason, and the Soul, are infinitely removed from the holiness and sublimity of the doctrine which pious *christians* have deduced from texts in the Gospel; though other christians, as pious, openly profess their dissent from them. Each sect must be justified by its own faith and good intentions. This only I mean to inculcate, that the tenet of our church cannot, without profaneness, be compared with that of the Hindus, which has only an apparent resemblance to it, but a very different meaning. [Sir William Jones.

Five contradictory Points of Calvinis

SIR,

The *Five Points* of the Calvinistic System are as famous and as well known as the name of Calvin. It strikes me, however, that there are five other points in the system as worthy of fame as these. I shall attempt to set them before you, not troubling you with many remarks, as I think they will shine sufficiently by their own light. I beg leave only to say, that I have enumerated just so many and no more, not for lack of matter, but because *five* has long been a sacred number in the system, and it were pity not to accommodate ourselves to it. Also, you must not expect the same nice connexion and mutual dependence in these new articles, which

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is so admirable in the old; for I think it would require greater skill than mine to join together what nature has so far put asunder.

I. It contradicts ITSELF.—It declares that atonement has been made for none but the elect, and consequently that none others can be saved; and yet asserts that their perdition is their own fault; that all not elected are of course and inevitably destined to misery, and yet that they may be called on to escape this misery. It asserts that Jesus Christ has made full satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of the elect, by taking on himself the punishment of their guilt and paying their debt; and yet that God pardons them freely. It asserts that we are righteous in God's sight only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us; and yet that every man shall be judged according to his works.

II. It contradicts THE SCRIPTURES.—The Scriptures tell us, that Christ died for *all*, tasted death for every man, is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for those of the *whole world*. This scheme says, no; he died for the elect only. The Scriptures say, that God will give his spirit to all who ask it, that they who seek shall find. This system says, that the spirit is given sufficiently to ensure salvation only to the elect, that to the rest it is so given as not to promote their salvation, but only so as to aggravate their condemnation. The Scriptures say, that every man shall be judged according to his own deeds and character; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But this system declares, that men are vile and depraved and liable to everlasting wrath, not for their own wickedness, but for the sin of Adam, *imputed to them;* and that they are righteous and saved, not by their own righteous-

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ness, but solely by the righteousness of Christ *imputed to them* and so made theirs.

III. It contradicts THE CHARACTER OF GOD.—God is infinitely wise, perfectly just, completely good, impartial, merciful. And it is our duty not only to say this, but see to it, that we ascribe to him nothing inconsistent with these attributes. For it is worse to attribute to him evil conduct, than to call him by an evil name. But this system says, that he has condemned a countless multitude of his human family to hopeless and interminable woe, and has made even helpless infants and playful children, to deserve and receive his curse, on account of the transgression of the first man. Does not this appear to contradict a character of impartiality, justice, and mercy? Besides, if we know any thing respecting the holy and pure Sovereign of all, it is that holiness and purity are, above all things, his delight. But this system represents him as having delighted in giving existence to a race utterly worthless and incapable of any good.* And then, in direct opposition to his attributes of benevolence and mercy, though his name is Love, and he delights to forgive, it represents him as making no attempt to regenerate and purify any but a selected few, and as leaving all the rest to inexorable and endless wrath.

IV. It contradicts THE BENEVOLENT PRINCIPLES OF OUR NATURE.—God has been pleased to endow us with such principles, as a part of his own image; and they so notoriously oppose and deny the system of which I am speaking, that its advocates have found it necessary to decry them as a part of our original depravity, and the enmity of a corrupt heart to the truth! As if that benevolence, which is the glory of God's character, could ever be any thing but a good and right principle

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in the hearts of his children! As if, when commanded "to be merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful," it were intended we should be *less*, instead of *more* merciful, than we are by nature! Let an earthly parent, thinking to obey this precept strictly, copy the example which this system sets before him. Let him, before his children are born, say, "I know they will be refractory, and selfish, and disposed to evil. Therefore, I should be justified in leaving them all to themselves, without attempting to correct them, or make them better. I will, however, favour two of them, will afford them every advantage, and instruction, will advise and warn them, and train them up to respectability and happiness. As for the rest, I will do nothing for them; let them try to please me, I will not be pleased; let them ask instruction, I will not give it; or if I must, for the sake of appearances, yet I will take care that they shall not be benefitted by it." Would not all the good and generous feelings of the heart cry out against such a parent? Are they not equally shocked, when such a system is attributed to the great Parent of all?

V. It contradicts THE EXPERIENCE OF EVERY DAY.—What says experience of that fundamental doctrine, total depravity? Are men so vile, so prone to evil, and evil only? Is there nothing good in any? Is there none that you can trust, none that you can love? Are vice and crime their only pleasure, their only end? Let any man look fairly around him, and bad as the world is —and truly it is bad enough—yet bad as it is, he will not find that it is entirely corrupt. Let him go into the bosom of his family, and soberly ask himself, if experience has given him reason to believe, that his smiling and affectionate, though mischievous, children, have nothing in them but a propensity to evil, no good dis-

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positions, no virtuous desires; that the partner of his life, has nothing in her, which God can love; and that his friends are perfectly hateful in his sight. No man ever learned the doctrine from his own observation. And yet, if human character were such a mass of corruption, we could not avoid seeing and feeling it at every time. So far as daily experience goes—say what you please of human crimes, I know they are but too many, and too great, and too common—yet let every man judge from his daily experience, and he would as soon believe that heaven is the favourite home of pollution, as that the natural character of man is the abode of *nothing* BUT pollution.

Common observation is quite as adverse to the other doctrines of this system, and proves them to be little better than fictions. Common sense wonders at them. *Reason stands aghast, and Faith itself is half confounded.* And there is no better evidence of the falseness of the whole scheme, than the fact, that it is not believed by the great majority of those who profess it. If you state it to them in naked terms, as it is written in the BOOKS, they exclaim against it as a misrepresentation, and declare that they have no such faith. Looking to their Bible, and guided by their common sense, and native conscience, they essentially mitigate the doctrines, which they feel bound to receive. This justice I rejoice to do them. And I find in this circumstance a strong corroboration of my belief, that this system, with its five points of faith, and its five times five contradictions, is not the truth of the Holy Scriptures.

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On believing what we do not understand.

From Benson's Dialogue.

An ingenious gentleman of my acquaintance, whom I call Novatianus, was in company with the lady Aspasia, who was exclaiming bitterly against a certain preacher, whose historical name shall be Eusebius. For Eusebius had asserted something in one of his sermons, which gave the lady great offence. Upon which she condemned him with a warm zeal, and great fluency of speech, and declared she would never hear him more as long as she lived. This occasioned the following dialogue between her and my friend.

Novatianus. What was it, Madam, in Eusebius' sermon, which offended you so much?

Aspasia. He asserted that we are to believe nothing but what we can understand.

Novatianus. Was that the thing which gave you so much offence?

Aspasia. Yes, Sir, and enough too. I wonder how any body can venture to assert such a thing.

So far the dialogue proceeded; and then they conversed for an hour or two about other matters; by which means this affair was quite forgotten. Then Novatianus begged the favour of a pen and ink and a small piece of paper; all which a servant readily brought him. Upon the paper he wrote down the following words in Greek, ὁ Θεος αγαπη εστιν, and then very gravely gave them to the lady and desired her to read them. That revived the dialogue, which proceeded as follows;—Aspasia looking first upon the paper and then looking earnestly and with surprise and confusion in Novatianus' face, said, "Sir, I cannot read them. What do you mean by

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this? It is not English, and they are strange letters to me. I cannot imagine what you design by asking me to read what I know nothing about." Novatianus gravely said, "Do you *believe* them, madam?"

"How can I," answered Aspasia, with great quickness, "unless I *understand* them!" "Hold, madam" replied Novatianus, "you may surely believe things which you cannot understand."

Aspasia. That is impossible.

Novatianus. Then I find that you are, after all, of Eusebius' opinion, notwithstanding his sermon offended you so much.

This startled the lady and caused her to say, "I profess I believe I am wrong. The thing never appeared to me in this light before. I really begin to suspect that I was mistaken, and that Eusebius was in the right. I beg his pardon for condemning him before I had duly considered the reasonableness of what he said. But what is the meaning of these words? For I cannot so much as read them."

Novatianus said, "I will assure you, madam, they are the words of holy scripture; and that according to the original. They contain a plain truth, and a very great and important truth. I would therefore have you try once more whether you cannot believe them." Aspasia was now impatient to have them explained, and said to Novatianus, "Tease me no longer, I freely acknowledge that I was too rash and inconsiderate; and I am now fully convinced, that I cannot tell, whether I believe what you propose to me, or no, till I understand what is meant thereby. Pray tell me, therefore, what the words signify, and keep me no longer in suspense. As soon as I *understand* them, I will then tell you fully, whether I *believe* them or no."

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"Well then," said Novatianus, "I will gratify you by telling you, that you may find the passage 1 John iv. 8. and the English of it is, 'God is love.'" "That proposition," said Aspasia, "I most readily and firmly believe; but I find I could not believe it, till I understood it. I heartily beg Eusebius' pardon, and sincerely condemn mine own folly and imprudence, in censuring what I ought to have applauded. I will promise you I will go and hear him again; and I shall now have a better opinion of him than ever."

The next time Novatianus visited Aspasia she continued of the same mind, and severely condemned herself, but applauded Eusebius; and thanked Novatianus, for taking so kind and ingenious a method of leading her into right sentiments upon that head. But was ready to wonder, that she had not before seen the matter in the same light; as it appeared so very obvious, now she had attended to it.

Forster's Sermons.

[The following notice is from the Christian Register, a publication to which we have already called the attention of our readers. We are happy again to bear our testimony to its value. Every friend of virtue and of pure religion must be gratified, that a work is gaining on the public, which is so well calculated to diffuse just principles, to soften the asperity of the illiberal, and diminish the unholy influence of sectarism. We cordially unite with the writer in his sentiments respecting the Sermons of the late lamented Mr. Forster.]

A volume of sermons by the late Rev. Anthony Forster, of Charleston, S. C. has been recently published, which deserves to be known and read. It is accompanied by a memoir of the author's life, containing a sketch of the history of his mind and the progress of his

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opinions, which exceeds in interest almost every thing of the kind which I recollect to have seen. No one can peruse it without instruction and delight. The sermons are of a practical character, deeply imbued with the spirit of serious piety, and, what I consider as a great recommendation, eminently *christian*. By which I mean, that they constantly appeal to the Scriptures upon every subject, especially to the language and character of our Lord Jesus, and very rarely indulge in any reasoning, or speculation, or train of thought, which has not for its basis the authority of the divine word. This characteristic gives them a peculiarly evangelical unction, well suited to affect serious readers, and to improve the humble and devout spirits that rest all their hope of instruction and salvation on the revealed will of God, and have less taste for the moral reasoning and reflection, which is so rich and powerful in other writers. As a valuable collection of *scriptural discourses*, this volume deserves, and I hope will receive, extensive patronage and circulation.

A MAN, says Milton, may be an heretic in the truth; and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the Assembly so determines, without having other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.—Let truth and falsehood grapple. Whoever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the surest and best suppressing.

The Eighth Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller, *On the Faith and Morals of celebrated English Unitarians*, will appear in the next number.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

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Charity rejoiceth in the Truth.—*Paul to the Corinthians.*

Those creeds are best, which keep the very words of Scripture; and that faith is best, which hath greatest simplicity.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

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RATIONAL CHRISTIANS;

ADDRESSED TO ALL WHO

"SINCERELY LOVE THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST,

AND

"FEAR GOD RATHER THAN MAN.

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THE

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AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

No. XIV.] FEBRUARY, 1822. [Vol. II.

Religious Controversy in India.

A very curious controversy has lately taken place in Calcutta, between the Missionaries and the celebrated Ram Mohun Roy. This latter personage is a native of India, and distinguished for his opulence, his superiour talents, his very great learning, and especially for having of his own accord early renounced the theology of his countrymen, and asserted the doctrine of the divine unity.

His first writings were designed to prove, that the ancient books of Hindu theology, in their original state, did not sanction polytheism, nor idol worship. These, he contended, were additions, which had been engrafted into the primitive system, deformed its simplicity, and corrupted its purity. About five years ago he published in the English language, extracts from the Vedas, or Sacred Books of the Hindus, for the purpose of establishing this point.*

In the course of the late controversy, speaking of himself in the third person, he says, that "although he was

* Other particulars respecting this subject may be seen in the first volume of the *Miscellany*, p. 75.

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born a Bramun, he not only renounced idolatry at a very early period of his life, but published at that time a treatise in Arabic and Persian against the system, and no sooner acquired a tolerable knowledge of the English, than he made his desertion of idol worship known to the christian world by his English publications; a renunciation which, I am sorry to say, brought severe difficulties upon him, by exciting the displeasure of his parents, and subjecting him to the dislike of his near, as well as his distant relations, and to the hatred of nearly all his countrymen for several years." After this period, he earnestly engaged in the study of christianity, but often expressed the difficulties which occurred to him respecting some of the abstruse doctrines taught by the Missionaries. In regard to the doctrine of the trinity in particular, he declared, after mature examination, that if this were essential to christianity, the whole scheme would be to him insurmountable. It resembled so much the polytheism of the Hindu religion, which he had laboured to disprove, that he could not consider it as making any part of a system of divine truth, which proceeded from God, and which inculcated the worship of one Supreme Being. And although it would not seem, that his researches have conducted him to a belief of this mystery, yet a writer in a late English publication says, "there appears every reason to believe, that he is, in the honest persuasion of his own mind, a christian, and entertains no doubt of the divine authority of Jesus, and the truth of the christian revelation."*

* *Monthly Repository*, vol. xvi. for August, 1821, p. 478. To this work we are chiefly indebted for the facts contained in the present article, respecting the controversy in Calcutta.

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More than a year ago, Ram Mohun Roy published in Calcutta a work, entitled, *The Precepts of Jesus the Guide to Peace and Happiness.* This consisted of compilations from the four Gospels, embracing the Sermon on the Mount, and nearly all the moral precepts and instructions of Christ. To this treatise, one of the Missionaries, supposed to be the Rev. J. Marshman, replied, and made serious objections, chiefly on the ground, that the doctrinal parts of the New Testament were not inserted, as well as the moral and preceptive. Ram Mohun Roy immediately came forward with an answer, entitled, *An Appeal to the Christian Public in Defence of "The Precepts of Jesus."* One paragraph of this Appeal is all for which we have room, but this acquaints us with facts of the highest importance. After several spirited and sensible remarks, meeting the objections of his opponents, and reminding them of the dissentions and bitter persecutions, which had prevailed among christians, wholly on account of their obscure and metaphysical dogmas, the author continues;

"Besides, the compiler residing on the same spot where European Missionary gentlemen and others, for a period of upwards of twenty years, have been, with a view to promote christianity, distributing in vain amongst the natives numberless copies of the complete Bible, written in different languages, could not be altogether ignorant of the *causes of their disappointment.* He has seen with regret, that *they have completely counteracted their own benevolent efforts,* by introducing all the dogmas and mysteries taught in christian churches, to people by no means prepared to receive them; and that they have been so *incautious and inconsiderate* in their attempts to enlighten the natives of India, as to address their instructions to them in the same way, as if

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they were reasoning with persons brought up in a christian country, with those dogmatical notions imbibed from their infancy. The consequence has been, that the natives in general, instead of benefitting by the perusal of the Bible, copies of which they always receive gratis, exchange them very often for blank paper; and generally use several of the dogmatical terms, in their native language, as a mark of slight, in an irreverent manner; the mention of which is repugnant to my feelings. Sabat, an eminently learned, but grossly unprincipled Arab, whom our divines supposed that they had converted to christianity, and whom they of course instructed in all the doctrines and dogmas, wrote, a few years ago, a treatise in Arabic against those very dogmas, and printed himself and published several hundred copies of this work. And another Moosulman, of the name of Ena' et Ahmud, a man of respectable family, who is still alive, speedily returned to Mohammadanism from Christianity, pleading that he had not been able to reconcile to his understanding certain dogmas, which were imparted to him."

The truths here disclosed are of the highest interest, as connected with the cause of missions. Nothing is more notorious, than the total failure of success, which has attended the labours of Missionaries in foreign countries. A genuine and permanent conversion is a most rare occurrence, even as testified by the detailed and minute accounts of the missionary journals themselves. We do not believe it can be proved, by any creditable testimony, that the number of converts since the establishment of missions among protestants, has been equal to the number of persons employed in the service. To every reflecting mind the question must forcibly occur, *what has been the cause of this failure?*

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Men of piety and zeal have been employed, years have expired, vast sums of money have been expended, and yet nothing, comparatively nothing, is done. How is this problem to be solved? How is it to be accounted for, that results have been so perfectly inadequate to the means used?

The mystery is clearly unfolded in the paragraph above quoted from an observing and very learned native, who has lived in the centre of the missionary operations in the east from their commencement. Things are taught as the doctrines of God, at which the human mind revolts. Christianity is presented in such a shape, that neither the untutored, nor the most enlightened understanding can receive it without doing violence to all the commanding principles of the intellect. The doctrines of the trinity, of a plenary satisfaction, total depravity, imputed righteousness and sin, and others of the same complexion, are made a perpetual stumbling block. The enthusiastic and lamented Henry Martyn confesses as much, in the brief account he has given of his ingenious controversies, both with learned Hindus in India, and still more learned Persians at Shiraz. With all his acuteness, with all his zeal and learning, he does not pretend to have produced conviction on a single mind; and yet, he seemed to think it more important, that his labour should be lost in idle attempts to impress these unintelligible dogmas, than be made valuable by communicating plain, practical truths, which would have won by their simplicity, commanded respect by their dignity, and thus gradually led the mind to embrace all that is peculiar and ennobling in the christian scheme.

It is surprising how it should be thought expedient to make these doctrines the first lessons for heathens, even

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admitting them to be true. Reason and experience demonstrate the impossibility of their being taught: and why is it considered a desirable work in the outset of conviction to plant doubts, and make darkness more dark? We remember, that the Rev. Mr. Campbell, in his first missionary tour in southern Africa, preached a sermon, through an interpreter, to the Bosjesmans and Hottentots, on their fallen condition in Adam, and the necessity of the atoning sacrifice of the blood of Christ, to restore them to divine favour. The same doctrine, connected with that of a tripersonal Deity, makes a prominent point in many of the tracts circulated among the natives, if we may judge from those distributed by the societies at home, and from which it is understood foreign tracts are translated.

Can it be expected, that pure christianity will ever take root in such a soil, or thrive with such nourishment? Would you begin to teach the science of numbers with the Principia, and the Méchanique Céleste, or geometry with the Curves of Archimedes? Would you put Aristotle and Longinus into the hands of a pupil, with the expectation, that he would read before he should see a grammar or a vocabulary? If you would not commit such absurdities in the common attainments of life, why resort to them in religion?

Among the Hindus, and eastern nations generally, are found large numbers of men, who do not yield, in point of intellect, cultivation, refinement, learning, to the wisest of the Europeans. From these men society receives its tone and its impulse. Their opinions are matured by study, and riveted by time. They are accustomed to reason and think. If you would make them receive a proposition, you must first take care that it be understood. It is in vain to say, that you teach truth, and

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have done your duty. It is no truth to them, till they believe it; and any attempt to force a dogma, without producing such a belief, would lead rather to an injury than a benefit to the christian cause, by fostering the incredulity, and exciting the ridicule of those, whom you would convert.

The truth is, the peculiar dogmas of orthodoxy are not such, as any human means can introduce among heathens, whether savage or enlightened. If these dogmas be indeed christianity, we must despair of seeing the Redeemer's kingdom enlarged, till human nature be changed, and the present constitution of things be reversed. Some excellent remarks on this subject have been published in the Christian Register, as extracted from the letter of a gentleman, who has long resided in India, and is still there. "The strict unity of the Deity," says the writer, "does not please our spiritual guides, or fall in with the views of the missionaries, who, nevertheless, have ever found the doctrine of the trinity, and the assertion that Christ is God, a stumbling block in their way The Chinese tell them they see no use in insisting on a new set of Gods being introduced in the place of their old ones. The Mohammedans accuse them of blasphemy in making a created man, although a great and blessed prophet, equal with God; and they accuse them of having falsified the original scripture, and of acting in direct opposition to the preaching of our Saviour, who says, pray to God alone. Unitarian missionaries would meet with less opposition than those of any other sect, as all appear ready to admit of one great, one sole cause, one God supreme. And the amiable character of Jesus Christ, his blessed doctrine, his pure, simple, but sublime religion; his love, charity, and good will to men, are acknowledged by every

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Mahommedan, or Pagan, who has had an opportunity of studying the Testament. I have paid some attention to the subject; and from China to the extent of our eastern possessions, I have found the aforementioned reasons the only ones of any consequence urged against the Christian religion." This is in conformity with the language of Ram Mohun Roy. It is further illustrated by the example of William Roberts, at Madrass. He is a native of India, and though a man of low birth, and illiterate, he has, by being attached to an English family, become acquainted with the language, and adopted the unitarian views of christianity. By his own exertions he has converted a number of his countrymen, and they now form a society for christian worship.

If our missionaries would take a similar course, they would have equal success. There is little difficulty in teaching the natives of India all the important doctrines of christianity. But they must be exhibited in their plain, original dress, as they came from the Saviour and his apostles. There can be nothing in a revelation from God, which necessarily shocks the understanding. The existence and attributes of the Deity are intelligible truths. The plan of salvation, made known by Jesus Christ, is a rational plan. The doctrine of redemption from iniquity, through the free grace of a merciful God has nothing in it mysterious. You may easily teach the moral evil of sin, the nature and reasonableness of repentance. You may teach the value and obligation of all the christian precepts; the laws which ought to regulate the conduct, as it relates to our Creator and our brethren, the laws of piety, charity, benevolence, humility. You may teach the doctrine of an immortal existence, and a future retribution. When missionaries will confine themselves to particulars of this descrip-

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tion, and will teach only the simple truths of the gospel, we venture to predict, that the fruits of their labours will be more apparent, and their task will be much less hopeless.

Form of Baptism.

MATTHEW, xxviii. 19. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

It is common with trinitarians to quote this text, as a proof of the doctrine of the trinity. With what propriety such an inference is drawn, will appear upon a slight examination. I propose to consider the several parts of the text in their order.

First, our Saviour does not pretend to issue this commission on his own authority. In the words immediately preceding, he says, "All power is GIVEN unto me in heaven and in earth," This language itself confutes the notion of his being the Supreme God, for if he were such, he would originally possess all power of himself, and it would be impossible, that any thing should be *given* to him. In this place, he is to be understood as meaning, that God has given him such a degree of power, as is requisite to accomplish the great purpose for which he was sent into the world, by aiding and sustaining his disciples amidst all their labours and perils in publishing his doctrines.

Secondly, the phrase, *teach all nations*, is better rendered, *make disciples of all nations*. It is thus rendered by bishop Pearce, archbishop Newcome, Wakefield, Whitby, Kenrick, and others. It is doubtful whether the apostles understood the extent of this commission

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at the time. It is certain they did not at first preach to the Gentiles. A miracle was necessary to convince Peter, that other nations besides the Jews were to be made partakers of the benefits of christianity. It is probable, therefore, that the apostles supposed the Saviour to speak only of the Jews of all nations, who were scattered in different parts of the world.*

Thirdly, *in the name* is a Hebrew phraseology, and in regard to the sense is redundant.† "The exacter translation," says archbishop Secker, "is *into* the name."‡ To be baptized into the name of Christ, is to be baptized into Christ himself, or into an acknowledgement of his authority as the Messiah, and a profession of his doctrine. Proselytes to the Jewish religion, were

* Le Clerc translates the text as follows, *Allez donc, faites des disciples parmi toutes les nations, et les baptizant pour être nommez disciples du Pere, du Fils, et du Saint Esprit.* Le Nouveau Testament, Trad. par Jean Le Clerc, Tom. Prem. 120. He adds in a note, that the word μαθητευσατε, is properly rendered *faites des disciples.* This corresponds with Wetstein, who recommends the reading of *discipulos facite*, more especially as the next verse begins with διδασκοντες, and no one would say *Docete—docentes.* See also Newcome's Version, and notes on this text.—Kuinoel. Comment, vol. i. p. 829.—Whitby says the meaning of the word is here "to preach the gospel to all nations;" but this seems rather a loose paraphrase than a definition of the terms.—"Convert all the nations." Campbell.

The German translation of Cannabich, is in accordance with Le Clerc. So gehet denn hin, und *macht zu Schülern* alle Völker, und taufet sie auf den Namen des Vaters, und des Sohnes, und des heiligen Geistes. Luther renders it, *lehret alle Völker*, in conformity with our common English version.

† Rosenmul. in loc.—Schleusner in verb. ῥημα, 7.—Doederlein. Institut. Theolog. Tom. i. p. 371.

‡ Lectures on the Catechism; Lec. xxxv. Works, vol. vi. p. 356. See also archbishop Newcome's Note on Matth. xxviii. 19, in his Translation of the New Testament, vol. i. p. 155,

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baptized into the name of the Father, or into the Father only; that is, into a belief, or acknowledgement of the one true God, who was the immediate author of the Jewish religion, and governour of the Jewish nation. When the Messiah came, this form was enlarged, and the followers of Jesus were not only baptized into a belief of one God, the Father of all things, but also of the divine commission of the Saviour, and of the influence and aid of the Holy Spirit in confirming the truth of his doctrines. I would only infer, that so far as the phraseology here mentioned is concerned, it affords no evidence, that Christ was the same being as the Father, or equal with him, or that the Holy Spirit was a person equal with the Father and the Son. The apostle represents the Israelites as having been "baptized into Moses," 1 Cor. x. 2, and yet, as Doederlein and others have observed, no one has ever thought of inferring the deity of Moses from this language.*

Fourthly, it is by no means certain, that the text was intended to set forth a prescribed form of baptism. There are, indeed, strong reasons to the contrary. No instance can be found on record, in which the apostles adopted this form. We are told in two or three places, that converts were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but not once that they were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If this form were positively enjoined by the Saviour, how did it happen, that it was not invariably used by the apostles? Is it to be supposed, that they would have disobeyed a positive command, and left the perverting influence of their

* That being baptized into the name of Christ, is precisely the same, as being baptized into Christ himself, is obvious from several examples in the New Testament. See Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 27.

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example to all succeeding ages? Archdeacon Blackburne renders the text, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, (baptizing them,) into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." According to this mode of reading, the command does not relate to the form of baptism, but to the conversion of all nations, Gentiles as well as Jews, to the faith and practice of the christian religion. Whether this reading be accurate or not, its results are supported by the example of the apostles.

Finally, whatever views may be entertained respecting the points above discussed, no fair construction of the text can make it an argument in favour of the trinity.* For admitting that it contains a prescribed form of baptism, and admitting also, what is by no means improbable, although we have no direct evidence of the fact, that the apostles sometimes used this form, yet let any one answer the question, in what respect this would prove the supreme divinity of the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, or their equality with the Father? Is this equality to be inferred from the circumstance of their names being mentioned together? If so, why not make the same inference in other cases where a similar collocation of words occurs? We are told, for instance, 1 Chron. xxix. 20, that "All the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads,

* Doederlein, in his long chapter *De Trinitate*, speaks at large upon this text, but confesses he cannot discover in it any proof of the doctrine, which he is attempting to support from other parts of scripture. As the *names* only of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are mentioned, without any reference to their natures or qualities, there is no evidence in the text itself, that they possessed the same natures, attributes, or qualities. Vid. Institut. Theolog. Lib. i. chap. i. sec. 3. De Trin. § 102.

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and worshipped the Lord and the king." But who would argue from this text, that the king was a divine being, and equal with God?

The ceremony of baptism, as first practised, was a form of initiation into the christian church. We have reason to suppose, that the words used in administering this ceremony varied according to circumstances. The object was a public profession of faith in the religion of Jesus, or a testimony of discipleship. As among the Jews an acknowledgement of God the Father was essential, so, after the coming of the Messiah, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a profession of belief in these was required of such as would be considered true disciples.

There was also a particular reason, why the Holy Spirit was embraced in the form of baptism. It was believed by many, that the miracles of Jesus were wrought by a diabolical agency, and were no test of the truth of his doctrines, or of the divinity of his character. To do away this impression, and enforce the conviction, that he acted always under the guiding influence, and supporting power of the Almighty, it was made a part of the form of baptism to exact a belief in this influence.* Where no danger of mistake existed in this respect, it is probable, that a belief in Jesus as the Messiah was only required. This opinion would seem to be warranted by the uniform example of the apostles in baptizing into the name of Christ alone. But whatever may be thought of the original form of baptism, it is not easy to conceive how any fair interpretation can bring the text in question to have any bearing on the doctrine of three persons in one God.

* Marsom's Treatise on the *Impersonality of the Holy Spirit.* p. 38.

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William Penn's Argument against the Trinity.

[In the year 1668, William Penn published his *Sandy Foundation Shaken.* This was a small tract containing brief arguments against the trinity, the doctrine of a plenary satisfaction, and justification by "an imputative righteousness." So much attention was excited by this work, that the author was soon after committed to the Tower, on account, as was stated, of the "offence it had given to some then at the helm of the church."

It was the object of his persecutors to induce him to retract his sentiments, and he was put in close confinement. But they did not effect their design. Penn remained inflexible. His noble resolution, his independent principles, and the conscious purity of his motives, are admirably depicted in his own language. "His enemies," says his biographer, "attained not their purpose; for when after some time, his servant brought him word, that the bishop of London was resolved he should either publicly recant or die a prisoner, he made this reply; 'All is well. I wish they had told me so before, since the expecting of a *release* put a stop to some business. Thou mayest tell my father, who, I know, will ask thee, these words; that *my prison* shall be *my grave,* before I will budge a jot; for I owe my conscience to no mortal man; I have no need to fear. *God will make amends for all.* They are mistaken in me; I value not their threats nor resolutions; for they shall know I can weary out their malice and peevishness; and in me shall they all behold a *resolution* above *fear,* conscience above cruelty, and a baffle put to all their designs, by the spirit of patience, the companion of all the tribulated flock of the blessed Jesus, who is the author and finisher of the faith that overcomes the world, yea,

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death and hell too. Neither great nor good things were ever attained without loss and hardships. He that would reap and not labour, must faint with the wind, and perish in disappointments; but a hair of my head shall not fall, without the Providence of my Father, who is over all.'"

These sentiments are fraught with the genuine spirit of religious liberty, the freedom which Christ has conferred on all his sincere followers, and they are worthy of the pious and benevolent man, by whom they were uttered. After languishing seven months in prison, he was released by the interposition of the Duke of York, afterwards James Second, to whom his father, Admiral Penn, had rendered distinguished services. Below we give that part of the *Sandy Foundation Shaken*, which relates to the trinity.]

The Trinity of distinct and separate Persons in the Unity of Essence, refuted from Scripture.

"And he said, Lord God, there is no god like unto thee. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One?*—I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me. Thus saith the Lord thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. I will also praise thee, O my God; unto thee will I sing—O Holy One of Israel. Jehovah shall be One—and his nies that might be urged, evidently demonstrates, the first days of the covenant and prophets, *but One was the Holy God, and God but that Holy One.* Again, "And Jesus said unto him, why callest thou me good?

* 1 Kings viii. 23. Isa. xl. 25.

† Ish. xlv. 5, 6, xlviii. Psalm lxxi. 22. Zec. xiv. 9.

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there is none good but One, and that is God. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the Only true God. Seeing that it is One God that shall justify. There be gods many,—but unto us there is but One God, the Father, of whom are all things. One God and Father, who is above all. For there is one God. To the Only-wise God be glory now and for ever."* From all which I shall lay down this one assertion, that the testimonies of scripture, both under the law, and since the gospel dispensation *declare One to be God, and God to be One*, on which I shall raise this argument.

If God, as the Scriptures testify, hath never been declared or believed, but as *the Holy One;* then will it follow that *God is not an Holy Three*, nor doth exist in *Three distinct and separate Holy Ones*, but the before cited Scriptures undeniably prove that One is God, and God only is that Holy One; therefore, he cannot be divided into, or subsist in an Holy Three, or three distinct and separate Holy Ones. Neither can this receive the least prejudice from that frequent, but impertinent distinction, that He is One in substance, but Three in persons or subsistences; since God was not declared or believed incompletely, or without his subsistences; nor did he require homage from his creatures as an incomplete or abstracted Being, but as God the Holy One, for so he should be manifested and worshipped without that which was absolutely necessary to himself; so that, either the testimonies of the afore mentioned [illegible] incompletely, not abstractly and distinctly the Holy One; or else their authority to be denied by these Trinitarians. And on the contrary, if they pretend

* Matt. xix. 17. John xvii. 3. Rom. iii. 30. 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. Eph. iv. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Jude, ver. 25.

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to credit those holy testimonies, they must necessarily conclude their kind of trinity a fiction.

Refuted from right Reason.

1. If there be three distinct and separate persons, then three distinct and separate substances, because, every person is inseparable from its own substance, and as there is no person that is not a substance in common acceptation among men, so do the Scriptures plentifully agree herein; and since the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God, (which their opinion necessitates them to confess) then, unless the Father, Son, and Spirit are three distinct nothings, they must be three distinct substances, and consequently three distinct Gods.

2. It is farther proved, if it be considered, that either the divine persons are finite or infinite. If the first, then something finite is inseparable to the infinite substance, whereby something finite is in God; if the last, then three distinct infinites, three omnipotents, three eternals, and so three Gods.

3. If each person be God, and that God subsists in three persons, then in each person are three persons or Gods, and from three they will increase to nine, and so *ad infinitum*.

4. But if they shall deny the three persons or substances to be infinite, (for so there would unavoidably be three Gods,) it will follow, that they must be finite, and so the absurdity is not abated from what it was; for that of one substance having three subsistences, is nothing greater, than that an infinite being should have three finite modes of subsisting. But though that mode which is finite, cannot answer to a substance that is infinite; yet to try if we can make their principle to

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consist, let us conceive that three persons, which may be finite separately, make up an infinite conjunctly; however this will follow, that they are no more incommunicable or separate, nor properly subsistences, but a subsistence; for the infinite substance cannot find a bottom or subsistence in any one or two, therefore, jointly. And here I am also willing to overlook finiteness in the Father, Son, and Spirit, which this doctrine must suppose.

5. Again, if these three distinct persons are one, with some one thing, as they say they are with the Godhead, then are not they incommunicable among themselves; but so much the contrary as to be one in the place of another; for if that the only God is the Father, and Christ be that only God, then is Christ the Father. So if that one God be the son, and the spirit that one God, then is the spirit the son, and so round. Nor is it possible to stop, or that it should be otherwise, since if the divine nature be inseparable from the three persons, or communicated to each, and each person have the whole divine nature, then is the Son in the Father, and the Spirit in the Son, unless that the Godhead be as incommunicable to the persons, as they are reported to be amongst themselves; or that the three persons have distinctly allotted them such a proportion of the divine nature, as is not communicable to each other; which is alike absurd. Much more might be said to manifest the gross contradiction of this trinitarian doctrine as vulgarly received; but I must be brief.

Information and Caution.

Before I shall conclude this head, it is requisite I should inform thee, reader, concerning its original. Thou mayest assure thyself, it is not from the Scrip-

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tures nor reason, since so expressly repugnant; although all broachers of their own inventions strongly endeavour to reconcile them with that holy record. Know then, my friend, *it was born above three hundred years after the ancient gospel was declared;* and that through the nice distinctions and too daring curiosity of the bishop of Alexandria, who being as hotly opposed by Arius, their zeal so reciprocally blew the fire of contention, animosity, and persecution, till at last they sacrificed each other to their mutual revenge.

Thus it was conceived in *ignorance*, brought forth and maintained by *cruelty;* for though he that was strongest imposed his opinion, persecuting the contrary, yet the scale turning on the trinitarian side, it has there continued through all the Romish generations; and notwithstanding it hath obtained the name of Athanasian, from Athanasius, (a stiff man, witness his carriage towards Constantine, the emperor,) because supposed to have been most concerned in the framing that creed in which this doctrine is asserted; yet have I never seen one copy void of a suspicion, rather to have been the results of popish schoolmen; which I could render more perspicuous, did not brevity necessitate me to an omission.

Be therefore cautioned, reader, not to embrace the determinations of prejudiced councils for evangelical doctrine; which the Scriptures bear no certain testimony to, neither was believed by the primitive saints, or thus stated by any I have read of in the first, second, or third centuries; particularly Ireneus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, with many others, who appear wholly foreign to the matter in controversy. But seeing that private spirits, and those none of the most ingenious, have been the parents and guardians of this so generally

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received doctrine; let the time past suffice, and be admonished to apply thy mind unto that light and grace which brings salvation; that by obedience thereunto, those mists, tradition hath cast before thy eyes, may be expelled, and thou receive a certain knowledge of that God, whom to know is life eternal, not to be divided, but *One pure, entire, and eternal Being;* who in the fulness of time *sent forth his Son,* as the true light which enlighteneth every man; that whosoever followed him might be translated from the dark notions and vain conversations of men to this holy light, in which only sound judgment and eternal life are obtainable; who, so many hundred years since, in person testified the virtue of it, and has communicated unto all such a proportion, as may enable them to follow his example.

The Christian's Creed.

I BELIEVE—1. That "unto us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Cor. viii. 6.

2. That "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

3. That "Jesus Christ died for our sins, that he was buried," that "God raised him from the dead;"—"him hath God exalted with his own right-hand to be a Prince and a Saviour;" that "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. Acts v. 30. xiii. 30. John v. 28, 29.

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4. That "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness;" that the Lord Jesus "is ordained of God to be the judge of the living and the dead;" that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Acts x. 42. xvii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10.

5. That "love is the fulfilling of the law;" that for a man "to love God with all the heart, with all the understanding, and all the strength, and his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices;" that christians should "walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time;" and "*above all things have fervent charity among themselves.*" Rom. xiii. 10. Mark xii. 33. Col. iv. 5. 1 Pet. iv. 8.

The first of these articles is stated by the apostle, as the faith of christians, in contrast with the faith of the heathen world.

The second contains the glad tidings of great joy, as stated by our Saviour.

The third is what the apostles of the gentiles first of all [illegible] the chief things preached to the Corinthians—what Peter preached to the Jews—and what our Saviour taught respecting the general resurrection.

The fourth [illegible] which Paul told the Athenians, that God had "given assurance to all men," in raising Jesus from the dead—what Peter said that Jesus commanded the apostles to preach and to testify—and what was abundantly taught by Paul in his epistles.

The fifth contains a summary of christian duty, as taught by Christ and his apostles. [Christian Disciple.

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Eighth Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller. On the Morals of celebrated English Unitarians.

SIR,

In my first letter I incidentally mentioned the names of several persons, whose lives and characters, it was thought, afforded no feeble testimony to the incorrectness of your charges of immorality and irreligion against unitarians. I was so unfortunate, however, as to select a few names to which you have taken great exceptions. Among these you specify Clayton, Hoadly, Chillingworth, Law, Blackburne; and your principle of selection would embrace Dr. Samuel Clarke, and all others, who were unitarians, and at the same time belonged to the English Church. You are amazed, that any one should refer to such men as examples of morality. "I am astonished," you say, "and know not how men, whom I am compelled to consider as honest and sincere themselves, can so far suffer their zeal to triumph over their prudence, I had almost said over their moral all your readers, who know any thing of the characters of these persons, have been equally astonished, that your own "zeal should so far triumph over your prudence," as to suffer you to arraign before your individual judgment, and condemn, with a latitude of censure amounting almost to reprobation, men, who have been universally admired for their talents, and revered for their virtues.

Since you have thus ventured, in terms the most serious, to impeach the characters of persons, who have always been considered not less an ornament to the christian profession, than worthy examples of the good

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influences of the unitarian faith, it becomes my duty to examine the *fact* in regard to their morals and lives, and also to inquire into the grounds of your impeachment. If, indeed, it can be made out, that these were bad men, and used religion only as a cloak for worldly and wicked purposes, as you would seem to insinuate, then it must be confessed, that the argument in favour of the moral tendency of unitarianism is rather weakened than confirmed by appealing to their example. But if the contrary be true, and they be ascertained to have been exemplary, and pious christians, it will follow, that you were mistaken, more vehement than accurate, and that the argument is sound.

As the only mode of settling the question in this shape, is by an appeal to their writings and cotemporaries, it can hardly be supposed, that my limited plan will allow me to go into a full investigation. I can only touch on a few prominent particulars. They shall be such, however, as will be conclusive. The truth is, you cannot select an equal number of men of so much eminence from any period of history, who were more distinguished for their excellence and christian virtues. Had you thrown your shafts at random, they could not have been more unfortunate in the direction they took, or the objects on which they chanced to fall. It is a fact, which you have not attempted to controvert, and which I am persuaded you will not, that these men were remarkable for their practical goodness. Why then are they loaded with charges so heavy and offensive, why so much abhorrence expressed of their very names, why are they libelled and proscribed as men, who were a disgrace to their profession, who are to be reprobated and condemned as malefactors, and whom no honest man in defence of a good cause can "claim as associates?"

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You answer, that in belonging to the Church of England, they subscribed to articles which they did not believe. It follows, that they were hypocrites, and their goodness a show for their own convenience and interest. As the burden of your charges rests on this point, it shall be examined with some attention.

The question is, whether these men did not obey the dictates of conscience, and conform to the decision of their judgment in the course they pursued. If so, it would have been criminal to act differently. They are not to be judged by a rule, which any individual, not acquainted with their motives, may imagine he should prescribe to himself under similar circumstances. By this mode of judging, you would admit no man to be conscientious, or sincere, or to act rightly, till he should be guided by your rule. You have denounced these men as hypocrites, immoral, and irreligious, on principles by which every man in the community might, in a greater or less degree, come under the same censure. When you can prove by a man's conduct, that he aims to promote selfish interests and unholy purposes by a sacrifice of every thing, which can dignify and adorn the human character, or that he disregards all the laws of right reason and of revelation, which concern him as an immortal and accountable being, you may then, and not before, discover some show of justice in such a sentence of condemnation, as you have passed upon these men. In the present case, no such proof can be exhibited. No motives can be urged, which could have induced them to dissemble. The whole tenor of their lives is a standing witness to their uprightness, and whatever may be thought of their views of subscription, it is contrary to every principle of justice and charity, of conviction and belief, to suppose that in a case of the

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greatest possible moment, they forsook the integrity, which had uniformly guided them in concerns of infinitely less importance.

It is well known, that very different opinions have been entertained by different persons, respecting the nature and terms of subscription. Some have contended, that the articles ought to be explicitly believed in their literal sense by the person subscribing, while others have considered them as designed to secure the peace and union of the Church, without intending to impose a belief, or a pretended belief, in particular dogmas. In the present connexion it will be sufficient to hint at three general modes, in which the subject has been viewed.

First, it was a very early opinion, that the articles were intended not so much to be articles of faith, as of peace. Such was the opinion of Laud, of Sheldon, and many others of that period. Some general forms were necessary to keep the Church together, and although the framers of the articles made them express their own belief, yet the object to be attained was a unity of action, an agreement of order, a resolution and promise to submit to the authority, and support the institutions of the Church.

This was the sense in which the subject was understood by Chillingworth. He publicly professed not to subscribe the articles, as articles of faith, but of peace. To this effect he speaks in the following words; "For the Church of England I am fully persuaded, that the constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox, that whosoever believes it, and lives according to it, shall be saved; and that there is no error in it, which may necessitate or warrant any man to disturb the peace, or renounce the communion of it; *this, in my opinion, is all*

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intended by subscription."* Here is no concealment, duplicity, nor dissembling. He tells you plainly and frankly, what he understands by subscribing; and whatever may have been his opinions in other respects, there is no room for doubting his honesty and integrity in this act.

He was first opposed to subscription from scruples of conscience, when a very advantageous preferment in the Church was offered to him; and the letter, which he wrote to Dr. Sheldon, declining this offer, because he could not assent to the articles in the sense, which he believed them to convey, affords one of the noblest testimonies of a powerful intellect, an excellent heart, an independent spirit, a lofty integrity, and great sacrifices for the sake of conscience, which have ever appeared. Speaking of subscription, he observes in this letter, "I thank God I am now so resolved, that I shall never do that while I am living and in health, which I would not do if I were dying; and this I am sure I would not do."† At this time he believed, that the articles should not be subscribed, unless they were believed in their most obvious sense. A long correspondence ensued, in which Sheldon, who was afterwards archbishop, argued, that the articles were meant to be "forms of peace." The reasoning of Sheldon, strengthened by that of archbishop Laud, who was the patron of Chillingworth, produced a change in his opinions. Without pretending to discuss the grounds of this change, I would simply inquire, with what semblance of justice, or candour, any one

* Preface to the Author of Charity Maintained, Sec. 40.

† This Letter may be seen at full length in Kippis' edition of the Biog. Brit. Art. Chillingworth; and also in the Monthly Repository, vol. ix. p. 3.

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can accuse him of treachery to his conscience in this decision, any more than in the first, when the inducement was just as strong? In referring to this subject, the editors of the Biographia Britannica observe, "Whether Chillingworth's opinion upon this head were right, or wrong, there can be no doubt, from the whole tenour of his life, that he acted with perfect integrity."*

You say of him, that "he was a protestant and papist by turns, and at length died a socinian, soon after having solemnly denied that he was one." This is harsh in the extreme, and the more so, as it is incapable of being supported by a shadow of proof. The mind of Chillingworth was uncommonly inquisitive from his childhood, and his love of truth was equal to his desire of attaining knowledge. By his early intimacy with a learned Jesuit, he was induced to embrace the Catholic faith; but his mind was hardly matured, before he discovered his error, and became, during the remainder of his life, the most able, learned, and successful defender of protestantism, that has ever engaged in the cause. This, in your language, was being a papist and protestant by turns. It is not true, that he was ever a socinian. It was a slander reiterated by his enemies during his lifetime, but, like other slanders, was never substantiated. Had you ever read Chillingworth's admirable apology for his change of opinions, I must believe you would never have injured his memory by such ill founded and ungenerous insinuations as those above. No one can contemplate his remarks without admiring his frankness, his charitable temper, his humility, his zeal for truth; nor without feeling the utmost confidence in the purity of his

* Biog. Brit. vol. iii. p. 518.

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intentions, the sincerity of his heart, and the piety of his soul."*

The views of Clayton seem to have been nearly the same as those of Chillingworth. He was, if possible, more open in the avowal of his opinion, as appears from his eloquent speech before the Irish House of Lords, in which he defended a bill proposing alterations in the Book of Common Prayer. He argued and proved, that it was not the intention of the original act of uniformity, by which subscription was required, to enforce a belief in particular doctrines, but simply to demand an "unfeigned assent and consent to *the use of* all things in the said book." Such was the language of the Act, but in the form of declaration then in use, the words here marked with italics wer omitted, thereby conveying a totally different sense, and perverting the original intention of the Act. "As there is," says Clayton in this

* See Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation.* Chap. v. § 103.—chap. iv. § 16.—chap. vi. § 56.

Clarendon says of him, that "he was a man of excellent parts, and cheerful disposition; void of all kind of vice, and endued with many notable virtues; of a very public heart, and an indefatigable desire to do good."

Some excellent remarks on the character and principles of Chillingworth, and the persecutions he received from his enemies, as well as strictures on the ravings of Cheynell respecting his last illness, death, and burial, may be seen in Hoadly's *Letter to Dr. Snape, prefixed to Pillonniere's Answer.* Works, vol. ii. p. 617, et seqq.

I take the liberty in this place to correct an error into which I have fallen in my third Letter. [Miscellany, Vol. i. p. 279.] The following sentiment is there referred to Locke, namely, "Let those, that in their words disclaim infallibility, disclaim it likewise in their actions." This belongs to Chillingworth, by whom it is thus expressed. "Require of christians only to believe Christ, and to call no man master but him only, Let those leave claiming infallibility, that have no title to it; and let them that in their words disclaim it, disclaim it likewise in their actions." *Religion of Protestants, &c.* chap. iv. § 16.

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speech, "a wide distance between being certain of the truth, and being certain of the falsehood of some propositions, it is no way inconsistent with the strictest honesty for persons to give their assent and consent, for peace and uniformity's sake, *to the use* of some particular forms of worship, either in doctrine or discipline, though they may not thoroughly approve of the things themselves, and to try to get them amended; while the public declaration of our assent and consent to the things themselves, ties down the mind from any further inquiry, and by discouraging all doubts and inquisitive industry, puts a stop to all improvement in knowledge, or any further reformation in religion." The same opinion he defended several years before, in a dedication to Dr. Stone, Primate of Ireland, which was prefixed to an Essay on Spirit.

Add to this, that Clayton was renowned through his whole life for his numerous virtues, for his amiable disposition, benevolence, disinterestedness, and indeed for all the characteristics of a pious and good man; that he was persecuted for his opinions, and suffered much from the reproaches and the ill treatment of the world,—add these things, and then ask yourself, what possible reason can be devised for supposing him to have been actuated by any other than conscientious, honest, and pure motives. He did not need, nor covet, the emoluments of the Church, for he possessed an ample fortune, and was known frequently to bestow more in offices of charity, than the whole amount of his ecclesiastical stipends. Instead of a lavish bounty of censure, therefore, a true christian spirit would find much to commend and admire in the virtues of such a man.*

* The following anecdote is illustrative of the character of Clayton. While on a visit to London, a person of respectable appearance called

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Secondly, the articles have been considered as requiring subscription in that sense, which the subscriber believes to be consistent with scripture. This opinion was adopted and defended by Dr. Samuel Clarke. It is in conformity with the protestant principle of taking the Scriptures as our only guide. No one can adhere to this principle in assenting to forms of human composition, unless he receives them in that sense only, which he believes the Scriptures to convey, and as affording such interpretations of the Scriptures, as are consistent with the meaning he attaches to them. Hence, whatever form of words any one may be called to subscribe, for religious purposes, he is bound to receive them in that sense, in which they can be made consistent expositions of scripture, and in no other. Dr. Clarke declares this to have been the principle by which he was guided, in respect to the trinity. "I desire it may be observed," he says, "that my assent to the use of the forms by law appointed, and to all words of human institution, is given only *in that sense*, wherein they are, according

on him to ask charity. Suspecting imposition, he at first declined, but when the name of Dr. Clarke was incidentally mentioned by the person, Clayton told him, if he would obtain a certificate from Dr. Clarke, respecting the necessity of his circumstances, he would afford him aid. A certificate was produced, and without further inquiry, he gave him three hundred pounds, which sum was abundantly sufficient to relieve him from all his embarrassments.

Hearing of this noble act of benevolence, Dr. Clarke sought the acquaintance of Clayton, and introduced him to the Queen, who was so much delighted with the simplicity of his manners, the gentleness of his disposition, his benevolent and charitable spirit, that she immediately provided for his being appointed to the first vacant bishopric in Ireland. It hence appears, that the sole cause of his preferment was the excellence of his character, for it was long after this period, that he attained the celebrity to which he was raised by his learning and talents. Biog. Brit. vol. iii. p. 621.

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to the explication given in the several parts of this book, (Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity,) agreeable to that which appears to me, upon the most careful and serious consideration of the whole matter, to be the doctrine of scripture; and *not in that sense*, which the popish schoolmen, affecting, for the sake of *transubstantiation*, to make every thing look like a contradiction, endeavoured to introduce into the church."* Will you say, that Dr. Clarke was not sincere in this declaration, that he was seeking for a subterfuge, that he cherished self delusion, and aimed to deceive the world, that he rashly and foolishly hazarded the safety of his soul, by defying the vengeance of a holy and heart searching God? You must either sustain these positions, or allow his purposes to have been good, and his conduct innocent.†

It is the same with him, as in the examples of Chillingworth and Clayton. You have no other criterion of judging, than the character, which he sustained through life; and it may be doubted if history have recorded one more worthy, or unexceptionable. The strength of his religious affections, and the high and uniform tone of his morals, which his writings display, and which no one has attempted to disparage, are well expressed in the following language of his biographer. "His piety was manly and unaffected, built upon the most solid grounds, and free from all pomp and show. The charity of his temper and good will was as extensive as the whole

* Introduction to the *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 33.

† Bishop Pearson seems to have had the same opinion as Dr. Clarke. Speaking of the Creed, he says, "I observe that whatsoever is delivered in the Creed, we *therefore* believe, *because* it is contained in the scriptures; and consequently must *so* believe it as it is contained there." *Exposition of the Creed*, 4th edit. p. 227.

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rational creation of God. The love of the religious and civil liberties of mankind was a ruling and powerful principle in his heart and practice. In a word, his morals, from the first of his days to the last, were without reproach. There was an innocence and inoffensiveness remarkable through his whole behaviour, and his life, when he came into the view of the great world, was an ornament and strength to that religion, which his pen so well defended."*

A third mode of considering the articles is, that they ought to be received according to the intention of the legislature, by which they were originally imposed. This view is supported by Paley.† He reasons, that it was not the original intention to make every man believe in each separate proposition, as such a thing is plainly impossible. The articles involve the most intricate subjects of metaphysical controversy, in which no two men were ever in all respects agreed. It was intended to exclude persons inclined to popery, anabaptists, puritans, and all others opposed to the episcopal establishment. Any person embraced within this list, Dr. Paley thinks ought not to subscribe at all; but any one not thus embraced may subscribe without giving credence to every article, provided he is convinced, that he complies strictly with the intention of the legislature.

Now I am very far from defending these modes of regarding the articles; nor does it come within my pro-

* Hoadly's *Life of Clarke*, Works, vol. iii. p. 468.

For a high eulogy on the virtues and piety of Dr. Clarke, see bishop Hare's Works, vol. ii. p. 23. Lond. 1746. It was a saying of the parishioners of Dr. Clarke,—"However we differ from him in some matters, we desire to see no other person in the pulpit."

† Moral Philosophy, book iii. part 1, chap. 22.

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vince to enter upon their merits. It is enough to bring into view the facts stated above to show, that the persons, whom you have censured with so much freedom, had reasons for their conduct, and such reasons as have been approved and acted upon by wise and good men of all parties. I do not assert the truth of their opinions, nor plead for their infallibility, but for their integrity, their conviction, and righteous motives. I infer these from the unimpeachable character of their lives, from their multiplied deeds of piety and goodness, and from their own declarations respecting their views of the nature and object of subscription. In screening them from your charges, I impose no tax on the indulgence of any person; I demand the exercise of common justice.

It is not important to investigate the particular motives of all the persons, whom your rule would include. Their precise opinions respecting subscription may not always be so accurately known, as in the examples above cited. But the argument holds good in all cases, that they ought to be considered honest in this particular, when they were known to be so in every thing else; and that whatever they thought of the mode, they were conscientious in the thing itself. If you deny this, you must deny, that character has any dependence on actions, and affirm, that men are to be accounted moral or immoral, according to the fancy or caprice of any one, who may choose to sit in judgment.

In regard to Hoadly, whoever doubts his integrity in any course he pursued, I would advise him to read his sermons on *Christian Moderation*, on *Judging one another*, and on *Persecution*. In these sermons may be seen the high principles of rectitude, of moral dignity, and of religious freedom, which influenced his opinions,

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and regulated his practice. In these may also be seen the deep responsibility under which he felt to his Maker, and the love and good will, which he cherished for all men. If a man's writings from the beginning to the end of a long life, are to be taken as any test of his principles and character, no one can be entitled to a fairer fame than Hoadly. He was an advocate, and a powerful advocate, for civil and religious liberty. His sermon before the king, on the *Kingdom of Christ*, which was the commencement of the famous Bangorian controversy, was wholly occupied in defending the great protestant principle of the right of private judgment, and perfect freedom of thought in religion. These were themes of which he was never weary. The purity of his morals was equal to his singleness of heart, and love of independence. Although he was attacked with much violence from every quarter, and compelled to make many replies, and meet many heavy charges, it was said of him at the time, and it is not likely to be controverted at the present day, that "the enemies of religious liberty had not been able to fix any disgrace on the unspotted character of the most excellent bishop."*

The case of Blackburne is more in point, than any I have noticed. He refused preferment, because he would not again subscribe. He was intimate with Lindsey, Disney, and others of the unitarian belief, and when Dr. Chandler died, the congregation at the old Jewry, in London, knowing Blackburne's views concerning the established Church, took pains to ascertain whether, if chosen, he would become their pastor. He

* See *An Account of the Bangorian Controversy*, drawn up by a person thoroughly acquainted with the subject, and with the character of Hoadly, and printed in the later editions of Hoadly's Works.

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declined, notwithstanding his income would be three times as large as the one he then received. "His continuance in the church," says Dr. Rees, "cannot be justly ascribed to any selfish and interested motives, because he might have left it with advantage, and he remained in it with a fixed purpose of accepting no preferment; and he refused very considerable offers of this kind." In his very able and admirable work, *The Confessional*, he opposes the notion in all its shapes, that the articles could properly be subscribed without believing them in their literal acceptation.* After having subscribed, he remained in the Church, but refused advancement on the condition of further subscription, and declined the most liberal offers out of the Church, which he might have accepted without subscribing. How is this conduct to be explained by your principles of hypocrisy and selfishness? How is it to be explained in any way, except by supposing the man to have yielded to a rigid sense of duty, and to have sacrificed the prospects of worldly gain and preferment to his religious scruples, and peace of conscience?

Such are the men, whom you charge with the grossest immorality, and of whom you say, in a late work, if they were unitarians, "they have lived in habits of the most shameful dishonesty and perjury; a dishonesty and perjury, which, if known, could not fail of rendering them, in the eyes of all upright men, a disgrace to any society calling itself a church of Christ."† Without stopping to descant on the delicacy of phrase, and mildness of spirit, with which this passage is marked, I would simply repeat, what I have before suggested, that,

* See *Confessional*, second edit. p. 202. Also, Ridley's *Three Letters to the Author of the Confessional.* Letter Third.

† Letters on Unitarianism, p. 108.

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putting religious considerations out of the question, common justice demands something like an examination, before a final and irrevocable sentence is passed. Even the inquisition had its judgment halls, and so much respect was paid to public sentiment, however debased and perverted, as to go through the forms of investigation. You have discovered a shorter method, and set up a tribunal, at which all these things are dispensed with in a most summary way, and the first step in the process is, to inflict the sentence of condemnation. I know not that any friend of truth has reason to lament the introduction of this new system, as in its operation it must effectually defeat itself. Rashness and violence are seldom accounted an indication of the justice of a cause; and a fondness for censure betrays more of a soured temper and depraved heart, than of christian love, kindness, and forbearance.

I am not disposed to assume for these men the same merit for independence, as I would for Robertson, Lindsey, Disney, Jebb, and others, who left the Church. Nor do I think this necessary to vindicate their characters from such allegations, as you have made. No one has any reason to question their motives. They were virtuous and pious men. Some of them remained in the Church against their interest, and frankly declared to the world in what light they regarded subscription. From these premises, which are thoroughly established, I maintain the inference to be legitimate and conclusive, that they were honest and sincere. Robertson and Lindsey continued several years in the Church after they became unitarians, and this, as they tell you, with a clear conscience, and under a sense of duty. No one, I apprehend, will have the hardihood to accuse them of "dishonesty and perjury," or of prevaricating

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and dissembling. There is a christian virtue, called charity, which, as practised by the Saviour and the primitive christians, should teach us to think favourably of our brethren.

Trace your principle farther. It operates with just as much rigour on other persons belonging to the Church, as on unitarians. In truth, it reaches to every individual, who subscribes the articles. Do you believe any person to have subscribed, who gave credence literally to every proposition in every article? Does not each one modify many parts in accordance with what he conceives to be the meaning of scripture? And among episcopalians, are there not all shades and gradations of theological opinions? This is not to be denied. But do you suppose the articles *literally* teach all religious opinions? Do they teach Arminianism to some, and Calvinism to others? Did they teach Jeremy Taylor to write against original sin and predestination, which are two of the most conspicuous doctrines of the articles? Did they teach the bishop of Lincoln to defend the doctrine of universal redemption, and Scott, and his Calvinistic brethren, to restrict the possibility of salvation to the elect? Did they teach Wallis and South to find only a trinity of modes in the Deity, and Sherlock to discover, that the Divinity consists of three beings, as distinct as three men? When all these questions can be answered in the affirmative; that is, when innumerable contradictions can be reconciled, it may then be proved, that all others besides unitarians have concurred in receiving the articles in their literal sense. It may then be proved, also, and not before, that unitarians, belonging to the Church, have been more dishonest than other episcopalians, and that all, indiscriminately, who have subscribed the articles, were guilty of "dishonesty and perjury."

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Once more. Let the principle be carried into your own church. When a candidate is licensed to preach, he is required, by the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church, to answer the following question in the affirmative. "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures?"* This declaration, so far as faith is concerned, amounts to precisely the same thing as subscription in the Episcopal Church. It binds the candidate to receive the Confession of Faith as the rule of his opinions. Now this formulary is in the highest tone of Calvinism. What shall we say, when we find Presbyterians, who have solemnly made this declaration, afterwards denying their belief of several articles in the Confession of Faith? Is it not a fact, that more than one fifth of the Presbyterian General Assembly are Hopkinsians? Is it not true, that some of them, I will not undertake to say how many, are inclining to Arminianism? Is it not true, that some, who call themselves the "stricter sort," say as little as possible of that vital doctrine of Calvinism, denominated, in the Confession of Faith, "God's Eternal Decree?" How are these things to be reconciled? Shall we cut the matter short, and deplore such lamentable instances of "dishonesty and perjury?" No. Let us put on the garments of humility and of charity; let each one remove the beam from his own eye, and study the imperfection of his own heart. Let him first scrutinize and judge himself. He will then be better prepared to enumerate the faults, reprobate the motives, and disparage the character of his brethren. Nay, rather, it is hoped he will be better prepared for aiding the progress of christian truth, and for establishing the

* Form of Government in the Presbyterian Church. Chap. xiii. Section 5.

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Redeemer's kingdom, the kingdom of piety and goodness, in the hearts and lives of men.

In my next I shall inquire into the theological opinions of Newton, Locke, and Watts.

Yours,

A UNITARIAN OF BALTIMORE.

Spirit of Orthodoxy.

The Rev. Dr. Mason, who has long been known as an eminent divine in New York, has lately resigned his pastoral charge in that city, and accepted the appointment of president of a College in the interiour of Pennsylvania. On leaving his people, he preached a farewell discourse, which has since been published. In its general aspect, this discourse bears characteristic marks of the author's mind and mode of preaching. It is made up of contrasts. Good thoughts, and just sentiments, expressed in strong and eloquent language, are often succeeded by a tameness, and in some instances a vulgarity, which could hardly be expected from the humblest and most uncultivated intellect. Warm and apparently sincere expressions of piety, love, humility, affection, are mingled with denunciations the most intemperate and bitter, and with the wildest bursts of passion.

But it is not our intention to criticise this performance, nor to attempt the miracle of reconciling discrepancies so obviously irreconcileable. We aim only to touch upon one topic. In the exuberance of his zeal, and the fulness of his bounty, the preacher has condescended to visit unitarians with an uncommon share of his notice, and to pour upon them a refinement of malediction, which we are persuaded no mind but his own could have conceived. This part of the discourse has

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already gained much public attention, and been received with universal reprehension and disgust. We could not hope to express our views of the subject in language so forcible and appropriate, as that of the celebrated Mr. Walsh. The testimony of this gentleman is doubly valuable, as his religious sentiments are well known to be widely different from those of the class of christians, whom he has so ably and generously vindicated from aspersions as coarse and intemperate, as they are wicked and false.

"We have just seen," says Mr. Walsh in the National Gazette, "another production of this eminent scholar and orator; which, though in some parts eloquent and edifying, is, in general, far from doing him equal credit by its spirit and purpose. We allude to his sermon, preached at New York, the 2d ult. on the occasion of resigning his charge of his congregation. Were not the sermon printed and *published*, we should not, perhaps, feel ourselves entitled to notice it thus; it might pass unmolested as one of the effusions of a paroxysm of zeal, escaped in the heat of pulpit exercise, and willingly left only in the memory of a devoted congregation. The references to the Unitarians, which are made in this vehement discourse, furnish some of the most revolting samples which we have seen of theological rancour in the present day. They are expressed in the strongest language of execration, and betray the utmost intensity of a hate like that described in the following phrase of Cicero,—'*odium immane et crudele barbarorum in hostem.*' If we could suppose the language of the preacher, the true criterion of his disposition towards the religious denomination whom he assails—that his anathemas are those of the heart as well as of the tongue, we should deem this an opportunity to express comfort and joy,

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that the age of *auto da fes* is passed away, and that the clergy have it no longer in their power to wreak their resentment of what they deem heresy, by torturing the body and destroying the life, as well as blasting the reputation of the obnoxious. We belong, ourselves, to a Church whose tenets are very different from those of this class of Christians, whom Dr. Mason reviles and curses; and in signifying our horror of his furious denunciations, we must not, therefore, be supposed to be acting in our own defence. It is our good fortune, however, to be acquainted with several of that class, persons of the most estimable character, for whom we ought to feel as much, nearly, as we would for ourselves, when we see hurled against them, a sentence of proscription and perdition, such as the following:

'Above all things, it is devoutly to be hoped, that you will never invite to the "care of your souls," a man who cares nothing about them. I mean, more particularly, for I would not be misunderstood, a man who belongs to that rank of traitors, who miscal themselves "rational Christians." Against these men I have ever warned you, as the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all that is valuable in his religion, and peculiar in his salvation. I know well that this congregation is considered by them as the very focus of what they term bigotry; and I do rejoice that thus far I and you have been counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Long may it continue so! Long may it be thought a hopeless case to attempt to bring you over to the fellowship of devils. Though I would not slander the devil; he promotes his work, as the destroyer, not by tempting men to his belief, but by persuading them to embrace what he does not believe—what is too coarse and abominable for hell itself; and what the philosophical Christians shall find to be so, when they get to their own place. The pretences of these men to kindness, and candour, and love, are all hollow. They mean to make proselytes of you, and twofold more the children of hell than themselves. O keep at a distance from them! Furthest from them, and their charity, is best. Come not near their ice, never to be melted, but in that fire which shall not be quenched. This pulpit, this church, were destined to the glory of the Lord Jesus. Let them never be polluted by a foot, nor profaned by a tongue, which are not moved by his honour.'

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"This is the strain of fierce and odious passion. We can no more admire the Reverend President uttering it from the pulpit, than we could have admired Sir Edward Coke, when he called Sir Walter Raleigh, 'Viper, monster, spider of hell, vile and execrable traitor, odious fellow, and damnable atheist.' It appears to us as repugnant to the true ends of christianity, as it is to the genius of our political and social systems.—

"We do not meddle with polemical divinity; we have no idea of interfering in religious controversies on points of faith—but we *feel* that when one denomination of christians or any association of persons styling themselves such, lead, in general, lives as useful and moral as the best of the community, they ought to be deemed sincere in *their* interpretation of the *Bible*, and that no member of any other denomination has a right to hold them up to the world as the worst of reprobates. Such intolerance and uncharitableness cannot fail to be condemned by public opinion, and richly deserve to be signalized for rebuke and repudiation. The example of a spirit like that which is breathed in this sermon, is bad. It may be more common than we suppose; it may have been further provoked than we imagine; but when it is vented in this manner, it can only exasperate blind animosities, and serve to bring the religious character into disrepute."

These are the sentiments of a truly liberal mind, unshackled by the fetters of bigotry and narrow prejudices, and unperverted by a blind zeal, which rages for the dogmas of faith at the expense of the civilities of social life, and the charities of a christian temper. Let the same spirit of independence, of liberal and just thinking, and of magnanimous forbearance, prevail among all christians, and we shall soon cease to be shocked with fierce anathemas and profane denunciations in the

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house of God; we shall be no longer compelled to witness the deplorable effects, which spring from a hardened religious sensibility, and from the violence of pampered passion, carrying desolation and death within the borders of christian truth, piety, and love.

A pamphlet has been published in New York, called "An Appeal from the Denunciations of the Rev. Dr. Mason against Rational Christians, addressed to all who acknowledge the Religion of Jesus Christ, and fear God rather than Man." We regret, that our limits will not suffer us to notice this performance so much at length as we could desire, and as its merits would seem to demand. Its tone and manner are happily contrasted with the ferocious violence of the Sermon, and, we believe, must convince every candid person of the superiour influence of the principles it defends on the heart and feelings, to those, which could sanction such an effusion as that quoted above from the Discourse.

Ordination in New York.

Our readers will recollect, that we have often had occasion to speak of a unitarian society, which has been lately established in New York. The violence of orthodoxy in that city was such, as to shock the piety, and wound the religious feelings of several persons, who desired to worship God in peace, and in the spirit of christian love, without being compelled to mingle the bitterness of wrath with their devotions, or listen to the unhallowed voice of denunciation and vengeance, instead of the holy accents of reverence to God, of humble submission to his will, and of a kind and benevolent disposition towards men. They were at length forced to separate from places of worship, where they found so little

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to animate their devotions, or to warm their religious affections. A sense of duty to their maker, no less than integrity to conscience, urged them to this step, and to unite in establishing and supporting a mode of worship more congenial with their views of the religion of the Saviour.

Such were the original causes of the Unitarian Society in New York. Since its establishment, its success has been more than adequate to the highest expectations of its friends. An edifice for public worship has been erected, which does equal credit to the taste of those by whom it was planned, to the munificence of the society at large, and to the energy and perseverance of those, by whom the work was conducted.

In the month of November last, the Rev. William Ware, of Harvard University, was chosen to be the pastor of this society, and on the eighteenth of December he was ordained to the pastoral office. The following churches were represented in the ordaining council, either by their ministers, or delegates, namely, Rev. Dr. Channing's, Rev. Mr. Pierpont's, Rev. Mr. Ware's, Rev. Mr. Palfrey's churches of Boston; Rev. Dr. Bancroft's of Worcester; University Church at Cambridge; Rev. Dr. Harris's of Dorchester; Rev. Mr. Taylor's of Philadelphia; Rev. Mr. Sparks's of Baltimore.

The services of the occasion were as follows; Introductory Prayer, by Mr. Taylor; Sermon, by Dr. Ware; Ordaining Prayer, by Dr. Harris; Charge, by Dr. Bancroft; Right Hand of Fellowship, by Mr. H. Ware; Concluding Prayer, by Mr. Pierpont.

Several circumstances conspired to render the exercises of the day peculiarly interesting. The performances were remarkably appropriate, and calculated to heighten the solemnity of the scene, as well as touch

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the feelings of the audience. The sermon was by the father, and the right hand of fellowship by the brother of the young pastor elect. The paternal solicitude of the one, and the affectionate sympathy of the other, were deeply and feelingly expressed. Of the charge it needs only be said, that it was dignified and impressive, and worthy of the high and liberal spirit of the author.

These performances have been published, and we shall hereafter make our readers more particularly acquainted with the sermon At present we will only recommend it to all, who would see some of the leading principles of unitarianism happily illustrated and ably defended, and who would know their influence on the heart and the affections.

The following hymn was written for the occasion by the Rev. Mr. Pierpont.

O Thou who art above all height!
  Our God, our Father, and our Friend!
Beneath thy throne of love and light,
  Let thine adoring children bend.

We kneel in praise,—that here is set
  A vine that by thy culture grew;
We kneel in prayer, that thou would'st wet
  Its opening leaves with heavenly dew.

Since thy young servant now hath given
  Himself, his powers, his hopes, his youth,
To the great cause of truth and Heaven;
  Be thou his guide, O God of truth!

Here may his doctrine drop like rain,
  His speech like Hermon's dew distil,
Till green fields smile, and golden grain,
  Ripe for the harvest, waits thy will.

And when he sinks in death; by care,
  Or pain, or toil, or years oppress;
O God! remember then our prayer;
  And take his spirit to thy rest.

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Anniversary of the Baltimore Unitarian Society for the Distribution of Books.

The first anniversary of this society, took place on the twenty-fifth of December last. A discourse was delivered on the occasion, and a very liberal collection was made, for advancing the objects of the society. After the services of the day, the secretary read the following

REPORT.

In conformity with the articles of association, the managers beg leave to lay before the society a brief statement of their proceedings during the past year. After having obtained subscriptions to a considerable amount, one of their first acts was a resolution to print a monthly publication, to be called the *Unitarian Miscellany*, and which was accordingly commenced on the first day of anuary last. Their monthly meetings through the year have been devoted to the general concerns of this work, to deciding on what books and tracts it should be deemed expedient to reprint or purchase, and devising the best methods of distribution. It has been their aim, to employ the means of the society in such a way as to produce the most general and beneficial effects.

The amount of funds derived from subscription, including the subscriptions to the Unitarian Miscellany, has been *two thousand two hundred eighty dollars, and fifty cents*, a portion of which is still outstanding. These funds have been so ample, as to enable the managers to purchase and distribute a great number of Bibles and other works, which are considered valuable as vehicles of religious instruction, as incitements to devotion and a christian spirit, and as guides to a pure and scriptural faith.

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The extraordinary and unexpected encouragement, afforded to the Unitarian Miscellany, has obliged the managers to resolve on printing a second edition of the first volume. Several of the first numbers are already reprinted. The character of the supporters of this work, must be highly gratifying to its immediate friends and patrons. It circulates throughout every part of the Union, and comprehends among its subscribers an unusual number of the most learned, intelligent, and distinguished citizens of the country, both in public and private capacities. It thus becomes an instrument of communicating what we conceive to be just religious sentiments, to that portion of society, which will be likely to produce the widest and strongest influence on the community at large.

It cannot fail, also, to be a source of great joy to the society, that opinions and views, for the advancement of which we have united our humble efforts, and which we deem of vital importance, as they relate both to our comfort and improvement in this world, and to our everlasting welfare, are becoming daily better understood and more widely and rapidly embraced.

In the extensive correspondence, which has been occasioned in the management of the concerns of the society, a strong and decided impression has been made on the minds of the managers, that the chief cause of infidelity in this country, has been the teaching, as doctrines of christianity, those corruptions, which have been incorporated with it in the articles of churches, and the decrees of councils.

In this advanced stage of intellectual improvement, it is not surprising, that the minds of most men should revolt at propositions, professing to be a revelation from heaven, which are contradictory in themselves, and in-

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compatible with the just government and paternal character of God. Men are not averse to the belief, that God has made known to his rational creatures, his will in relation to their moral conduct, and their prospects in a future state of immortality; nor do they revolt at the gospel evidences of the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth, his holy messenger; but only at the perverse interpretations and inconsistent doctrines, which these evidences have been supposed to maintain, and which have diminished their force and weakened their efficacy.

Is it not, then, the duty of this society, as christians, to extend, as diffusely as their means will admit, such works as will carry on that reformation, which commenced with Luther and Calvin, with Zuinglius and Erasmus, and which, we trust in God, will result in the complete restoration of the religion of Jesus Christ?

By order of the managers,

HENRY PAYSON, *Prest.*

After the reading of the report, the society proceeded to elect the following managers for the ensuing year,

HENRY PAYSON, *President.*
CHARLES H. APPLETON, *Secretary.*
WILLIAM READ, *Treasurer.*
NATHANIEL WILLIAMS, *Librarian.*

HON. THEODORICK BLAND,	ISAAC PHILLIPS, JUN.
REV. JARED SPARKS,	JOHN HASTINGS,
HUGH YOUNG,	SAMUEL G. HYDE,
ABRAHAM PYKE,	DANIEL KRABER, JUN.

The Rev. Robert Little has been chosen pastor of the Unitarian Society in Washington City. A handsome and commodious house for public worship, is now building by the society, and will be completed in the spring.

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JUST RECEIVED AND FOR SALE,

AMONG BOOKSTORES OF

F. LUCAS, Jr. & N. G. MAXWELL,

A

SERMON

Delivered Dec. 18, 1821, at the Ordination of the

REV. WM. WARE,

TO THE PASTORAL CHARGE OF THE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

IN NEW YORK,

By his Father, HENRY WARE, D. D.

Hollis Professor of Divinity in the University in Cambridge, Mass.

SOLEMNLY ATTACHED TO THE

CHARGE

AND

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

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——— a Denominated View of Christians of Excellency. Price 1 dollar.

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AGENTS.

MAINE.—*Benjamin Fulsom*, Eastport; *Joseph Jackson*, Portland.

NEW-HAMPSHIRE.—*John H. Foster*, Portsmouth; *J. H. Prentiss*, Keene; *Hill & Moses*, Concord.

MASSACHUSETTS.—*Cummings & Hilliard*, and *Gould & Everett*, Boston; *John Andrews*, *Jun.* Newburyport; *Cushing & Appleton*, Salem; *William Hilliard*, Cambridge; *Horatio Crafts*, Lancaster; *Charles Hayward*, *Daniel Lombard*, Springfield; *George Hall*, Springfield; *Amos Mayhew*, Charlemont.

RHODE-ISLAND.—*George Hough*, Providence.

CONNECTICUT.—*Howe & Spalding*, Newhaven; *John Parish*, Brooklyn; *John M. Niles*, Hartford; *Henry Channing*, New London.

NEW YORK.—*Hoyt, Spalding & Dwight*, New York; *Ben. Parker*, Troy; *Isaac B. Perkins*, Trenton; *Henry O. Rogers*, Ogdensburgh; *Thomas Walker*, Utica; *Israel W. Cook*, Albany.

PENNSYLVANIA.—*Abraham Small*, Philadelphia; *Samuel P. Langer*, Hanover; *Benjamin Bakewell*, Pittsburgh.

MARYLAND.—*William D. Bell*, Hagerstown; *J. P. Morton*, Fredericktown.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—*William Cooper*, *P. Thompson*.

VIRGINIA.—*Wm. Muhlenfeld*, Charlestown; *Jefferson Coy*; *C. Hall*, Norfolk; *J. W. Colton*, Richmond; *Wm. W. Weeks*, Winchester; *F. D. Smith*, Eastern Northampton Co.

NORTH CAROLINA.—*Joseph Gales*, and *R. D. Gales*, Raleigh; *Henry Blount*, Nashville; *Wm. Reid*, Charlotte, Mecklenburgh Co.

SOUTH CAROLINA.—*J. B. Schenck*, Charleston.

OHIO.—*Joseph Clingan*, Wooster.

KENTUCKY.—*Rev. J. Rankin*, Paris; *J. Bradley*, Cane Ridge; *Wm. Sebree*, Georgetown; *William M. Gibbs*, Lexington.

LOUISIANA.—*V. Crofts*, New-Orleans.

MISSISSIPPI.—*H. Hamill Hunt*, Vicksburgh.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

[illegible] MARCH, 1822. [Vol. II.

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Charity rejoiceth in the Truth.—*Plato in the Unpublished.*

"Those records are best, which keep the best assets of Scripture, and that faith is best, which hath pressed complaint."—*Jeremy Taylor.*

Baltimore:
PUBLISHED MONTHLY,
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1822.

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PROSPECTUS.

The principal object proposed in the present work, is to set forth the doctrines, and inculcate the truths of the christian religion, as they are usually understood by Unitarians. It is published monthly, in numbers, each number containing not less than thirty-six pages.

The annual price to subscribers is *one dollar and fifty cents*, payable on the first of May.

Any person becoming responsible for six subscribers, is entitled to one copy gratis. Agents to correspond with the Secretary of the Baltimore Unitarian Book Society.

JUST RECEIVED AND FOR SALE,

BY

F. LUCAS, Jr. & N. G. MAXWELL,

AN

APPEAL

FROM THE DENUNCIATIONS OF THE

REV. DR. MASON,

AGAINST

RATIONAL CHRISTIANS;

ADDRESSED TO ALL WHO

ACKNOWLEDGE THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST,

AND

FEAR GOD RATHER THAN MAN.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

No. XV.] MARCH, 1822. [Vol. II.

Independent Church.

Among protestants are three general forms of church government and discipline, namely, the Independent, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian. By the first, all ecclesiastical authority is vested in each separate congregation; the second maintains a parity in the ministerial office, but reposes the sole power of ordination, and of instituting rules of discipline, in the hands of a presbytery, or an associated body of clergymen; the third is distinguished by having three orders in the ministry, called bishops, priests, and deacons, and by maintaining, that the order of bishops alone has the power of ordination.

All these forms have been defended by learned men, and warm partizans. The advocates of each have claimed pre-eminence for their scheme, and asserted that it was founded on divine right, established by the authority of the apostles, and the usages of the primitive christians. This diversity of sentiment is enough, if we had nothing more, to show, on what a feeble foundation any argument for a *divine right* must rest. Had the Saviour instituted a particular form of government, which should be essential to give validity to the minis-

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terial office, and to establish a proper organization of his church, the subject would hardly have been left so much in the dark, that men of equal seriousness, learning, and research, should come to conclusions totally opposite. Whatever is *essential* to the faith, practice, and salvation of his followers, must, in the nature of things, be plain, and easily understood.

It will be a difficult task for any one, who is not influenced by a predilection for a system, to discover a single passage in the four Gospels, which indicates the will of the Saviour respecting the external government of his church. The discipline of the heart and the affections, is abundantly and repeatedly taught; the rules of a good life are positive and clear; the spirit of order, amity, and union, pervades all his instructions; but not a rule is given, not a word is said, respecting outward forms, the mode of ordination, or qualifications for office. And although we learn in holy writ some of the practices of the apostles, yet they have left no injunctions, nor any where declared, that they conceived a particular mode the only correct one. All these things appear to have been left to the future discretion and judgment of christians. It is their duty to adopt such a system of government and discipline, as they think most likely, under given circumstances, to secure the great ends of religion, which are holiness of life, piety unfeigned, charity and love for men, and an entire conformity to the will of God.

We believe the Independent form was the one in use by the apostles, and as nearly like that since adopted, as could be expected under the different circumstances of the times. Episcopacy was early in use. The unnatural combination between church and state, which commenced in the first ages of christianity, required

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such a system to keep up the unholy alliance, and cement parts, which, in their native properties, were so discordant. This system appears to us less calculated, than either of the others, to encourage the growth of religious truth and liberty; yet, as we do not hold religion to consist in forms, we believe, that whatever these may be, they do not necessarily restrain the exercise and the increase of piety in the heart, or of the practical virtues. For this reason, we form our estimate of the religious qualifications of others by their persons, and not by their mode of worship; by their practice, and not by their faith; by their virtues, and not by their creeds.

The Independent system was revived nearly two hundred and fifty years ago by Brown in England, and was soon after introduced into Holland. Its first advocates were called Brownists. It was modified and systematized by John Robinson, who was for some time minister of a congregation of Brownists at Leyden. From this period, the followers of Brown and Robinson, and all, who complied with their form of church government, were denominated Independents.* The name had no regard to doctrines; for although most of the Independents were Calvinists, some of them were nevertheless Arminians; and in later times, christians holding to every variety of doctrine have arranged themselves under this title. It relates exclusively to ecclesiastical government.

* Mosheim supposes the name may have been derived from a passage in Robinson's writings, where he says, in speaking of his views of church government; Cœtum quemlibet particularem esse totam, integram, et perfectam ecclesiam ex suis partibus constantem, immediatè et *Independenter* (quoad alias ecclesias) sub ipso Christo. *Apologia*, cap. v. p. 22.

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We have been led into these observations from a knowledge, that erroneous representations have been circulated respecting the import of the name *Independent Church*, as adopted by a society in this city. It has been said, that it implied a freedom of thought, a latitude of sentiment, a resoluteness of inquiry, an independence of action, which those, who take the name, conceive are not common, or allowable, in other societies. This report is gratuitous, and without truth. Whatever may be the fact involving these points, it is certain they have no bearing on the name under discussion. This relates simply to the form of church government, which the persons, constituting this society, choose to establish, as the system of external order and discipline, and which they believe most nearly to resemble that of the first Christians. That is, they hold it to be the province of every christian congregation to regulate its own concerns, to form its own rules, to choose its minister, and to appoint such a mode of ordination, as they shall deem expedient. They believe this liberty essential to the universal prosperity of the christian church, and that the Scriptures themselves are sufficient on this subject, without any aid from the wisdom, counsels, or deliberations of men in forming laws and regulations, which shall be binding on those, who have no voice in framing them, and who may not be able to perceive their agreement with the word of God. They believe Christ to be the supreme head of his church, and that every man may be his sincere and acceptable follower, who obeys his instructions with a pure heart, and makes his example the model of his life. Such rules of order, as will facilitate this purpose, and secure harmony and christian fellowship

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among the members of a congregation statedly worshipping together, ought to be instituted and obeyed.

This plan does not preclude a mutual relation between distinct societies. It allows of an adjustment of difficulties, which may occur in any congregation, by a reference to the opinions, or advice, of any persons, who may be selected from other congregations by a mutual consent of the parties. Whenever a society adheres to the principles of regulating itself, free from the shackles of a contract or combination with other societies, it is strictly independent.

Congregationalists and Independents originally differed only in name; but latterly a large portion of the congregational churches, especially in this country, have suffered encroachments to be made on their independence, by uniting in conventions, associations, and consociations. If this system aimed at nothing more than mutual advice, encouragement, and aid, it would be consistent with Independency. But when it is extended so far, as to allow a certain number of clergymen of different congregations to consociate and eject one of their brethren from his office, even against the consent of a majority of the congregation to which he belongs, it is in vain to look any longer for freedom, or to talk of independence. You have as potent a hierarchy as the most ambitious head of the papal see could ever have desired. The proper system of Independency considers every congregation competent to elect and discharge its minister, and to decide on all cases of misdemeanor, as well in respect to him as to each member. The Cambridge Platform, and the Plymouth Platform, have served as rules of discipline to most of the congregational churches in New England; but neither of them is consistent with scriptural free-

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dom. Of the latter, indeed, which is confined chiefly to Connecticut, it can hardly be said, that, in its proper latitude and spirit, it has respect to civil, much less to religious liberty. May the day soon arrive, when the only *platform* of christian faith, practice, and discipline, shall be the unadulterated word of God.

Sparks' Letters on the Episcopal Church.

Our brother editors of the Richmond Evangelical and Literary Magazine, have had this work under their notice during the last five months, and have at length closed their labours. Their remarks are chiefly confined to the two last letters. Let none of our readers imagine, however, that this deliberate movement of the reviewers indicates any want of talent for despatch. By a dexterous management, they have contrived to embrace two objects in the same plan. A late work of the Rev. John Pye Smith is united with the Letters on the Episcopal Church, and made to take a leading part in the article.

The reviewers' principal task has been to give a sort of abridgment, or abstract, of Dr. Smith's work. Through their optics, every thing here is seen in most captivating colours; and to their judgment, all is wise, and profound, and learned, and convincing. But when Mr. Sparks' two last letters cross their vision, all these images suddenly vanish, and the unfortunate reviewers are left to brood over a melancholy wreck of perverted intellect, and wasted attainments. The author's temerity is discovered to be inconsiderate, his arguments weak; his decisions inconclusive, his interpretations forced, his criticisms unnatural, his knowledge limited, his opinions

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ridiculous. All he has said, in fact, is represented as running into some extreme either of folly or extravagance, of weakness or absurdity. Our greatest wonder has been, that the learned reviewers should think it worth while to bestow so much consideration on a work of such a character.

But we are not about to solve this problem, nor to discuss the accuracy of their opinions, or the merits of their performance. We have a word or two only to say on some of their closing observations. In alluding to Mr. Sparks' Letters they remark;

"We can neither approve the spirit nor the execution of the work before us. We admit, that he says many things truly, and many things well; but considering that no small part of the work is not an answer to Dr. Wyatt's Sermon, but a direct attack on the Episcopal Church, we do think that he, without occasion for it, says many things calculated to wound the feelings of our episcopal brethren. In many instances there is an air of haughtiness and of scorn, which Mr. Sparks is not warranted to assume. Because Dr. Wyatt showed himself unacquainted with biblical criticism, in its present improved state, did Mr. Sparks take him as a fair sample of southern clergymen, and suppose that he might without check or control throw out the rash interpretations of unitarian critics? One would imagine, that he thought his opponents ignorant of the first principles of their profession, as scripture interpreters, and that he might give himself full license on this subject."

Now in regard to the *spirit* of Mr. Sparks' work, we are persuaded the reviewers have been more hasty than discreet in their judgment. They are too sharp sighted and fastidious. The general voice of its readers is decidedly adverse to them. If we mistake not, it has

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been universally approved for its mildness of spirit, deference of manner, and fairness of argument, even by such readers as have had no sympathy with its sentiments. Some parts, no doubt, are expressed with more earnestness than others, and with an evidently sincere and firm conviction on the part of the author, that his views are accurate and important. But we deny, that a reprehensible temper is any where indicated, or any other than a candid, friendly, and christian spirit. We know of nothing, which ought to wound the feelings of episcopalians, unless their nerves are so delicate as to be painfully excited by direct arguments, and a statement of evident facts.

As to Dr. Wyatt's qualifications for a theologian, we cannot conjecture by what authority these reviewers have ventured to insinuate, that he has "showed himself unacquainted with biblical criticism in its present improved state." We are not aware of any thing in Mr. Sparks' book, which could have encouraged them to hazard such an insinuation. We are not engaged to vindicate or defend Dr. Wyatt, yet we may be permitted to give our opinion, that it seems hardly fair to throw out such a hint, accompanied with the impression, that it is sanctioned by the Reply to his sermon.

Whether he is to be "taken as a fair sample of southern clergymen," is no concern of ours to inquire. We should deem it a praise, however, with which they ought to be gratified, if it could be said of them all, that they were as learned divines, and as good men. We are not umpires, and shall not undertake to decide, whether all the southern, or all the northern clergymen deserve this praise.

The question is asked, whether Mr. Sparks "supposed that he might without check or control throw out the

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rash interpretations of unitarian critics?" In reply, we beg permission to ask another question, namely, whether these reviewers "suppose they may without check or control throw out the rash interpretations of *trinitarian* critics?" If so, they will not, most surely, deny to Mr. Sparks the same privilege. Let them answer the latter question, and they will encounter no perplexities in the former. Christianity is a religion of freedom. It is not only a right, but the most solemn duty of every man to give such interpretations of the Scriptures, as he thinks they demand. Mr. Sparks seems to have discharged this duty according to the convictions of his understanding. He was not contending with "opponents," but simply exhibiting and illustrating what he conceived to be scripture truth, and doctrine. He undoubtedly has as good a right as any other man to "give himself full license on this subject." Nor do we perceive why the Richmond reviewers should imagine themselves exclusively entitled to this "license." In their use of it, we presume they will be ready to acknowledge, that they have not felt so tremblingly alive to its offence, or impropriety, as to be deeply troubled with qualms of conscience, or the pain of an ungrateful duty. Let them be as indulgent to others as to themselves, and they will no longer be inclined to restrict the privileges, or encroach upon the rights and liberty of christians.

Rev. Mr. Eastin's Protest.

[In a former number, Vol. I, p. 289, we inserted a letter from the Rev. Mr. Eastin of Kentucky, giving an interesting account of his conversion to the unitarian faith. It will be recollected by our readers, that his

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conviction was produced solely from perusing the Scriptures, and collating and carefully weighing every passage, which has been supposed to have a bearing on the trinity. He was at that time a Baptist, had charge of three churches, and belonged to an Association called the Elkhorn Association. When his change of opinion became known, certain charges were preferred against him, a meeting of the Association was ordered, and he was summoned to appear and vindicate himself. He was ultimately expelled from the Association, with a majority of the three churches to which he ministered. In the mean time, he and his brethren, sent a protest to the churches assembled to pass judgment on them, and also a letter explaining and defending their opinions. From these two manuscript documents we present a few extracts below, with the spirit of which our readers cannot fail to be pleased.

Heresy has been used as a term of reproach ever since the commencement of christianity. It is the watchword of the ruling party; and although it has never been defined in plain words, yet many an honest man has lost his life by it, and many more their reputation. Perhaps this latter is all that was intended, by the application of the term heretics to us. But admitting the allegation to be true, what a noble opportunity was offered to our brethren for the exercise of love and charity in administering the first and second admonition before they proceeded to reject. This method, however, which the gospel enjoins, and which reason approves, was neither resorted to, nor approved.—

We have not willingly, or knowingly given offence to any. We do not believe a difference of opinion is always a difference in principle. Or, supposing it is, has

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not one side as good a right to its opinion as the other? Who is to judge in this case? One side may exceed in numbers, but this can be no test of truth. If a majority of numbers be an accurate criterion of judging on which side truth lies, what will become of christianity? suppose you should enter into a combination to have our churches excluded for what you conceive to be a difference of opinion, would it not be commencing a system, which would operate with great injury to all the churches? Must not the safety of church members depend on saying, that they believe as the church believes, whether they do or not? And will not this be a direct means of inducing church members to surrender their consciences into the hands of their spiritual leaders, and timidly submit to their direction? Will you not be obliged to exclude from fellowship and privilege, or in other words to persecute, all such as may have independence enough to avow an opinion, which a few among us may be pleased to call heresy? Certainly you will. And then what will be the situation of members, who submit to the honest convictions of their own minds? They must be excommunicated; nor can you avoid thus sifting your churches, unless you would subject yourselves to the charge of inconsistency.—

If we differ in opinion on some subjects, it is not because we have any pleasure in so doing, but because we are bound to yield to the decisions of our understanding, on a candid and impartial examination of the Scriptures, which we hold to be the only infallible rule of christian faith and conduct. And this is a right, which has always been claimed and supported by Baptists in all countries and ages. Wherever they have been known, they have stood firm against the combined powers of kings, popes, and prelates, who were weak, or

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wicked enough to assume dominion over conscience. We, therefore, claim the right of examining and judging of the Scriptures; and in this matter we reject all doctrines and commandments of men, as well as all human creeds, and confessions of faith, formed, selected, or compiled by fallible men; and we protest against all power assumed, either by the many or the few, to dictate to us what we must believe as the terms of a scriptural faith.

Our adversaries say in their charge; "We are grieved with the church at Cooper's Run for denying the doctrine of the trinity, and holding that Jesus Christ is not truly, really, and properly God; which we believe is contradictory to the scriptures." Before we come directly to this charge, we have one or two observations to premise.

In the first place, the charge is expressed in extremely vague and indefinite terms. Trinitarians are much divided among themselves on this subject. Some assert confidently, that in the Godhead are three distinct divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, each person selfexistent, independent, and all united in one divine essence. Others, overcome with the insuperable difficulties of this scheme, reject it, as being contrary both to revelation and reason. They assert, that God is one person, and that in this person are three divine offices,—the term Father is an office, the term Son is an office, the term Holy Ghost is an office, all existing in the one Supreme God. It would seem proper for the society, before they proceed to deal out anathemas against a sister church, to define which of these two notions, or of the numerous other notions of the trinity, they adopt as necessary to be believed before a man can hope for salvation. Denying the trinity, in either of the

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senses above stated, is not, in our opinion, contrary to the Scriptures, as our brethren have asserted.

And first, we shall demonstrate from the Scriptures, that there is one person, or intelligent being, who alone is God, supreme, almighty, and eternal; and that this one person is the Father, or, as he is sometimes called, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is ONE Lord." "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." "Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any." "Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most High over all the earth." "And the scribe said unto him; well, Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is ONE God, and there is none other but HE."* In these passages, to which many others might be added, the personal pronouns, I, thou, me, he, him, prove beyond contradiction, that God is one; that is, one being, person, or essence, and that he is distinguished from all other beings, persons, or essences. If God be more persons than one, the Sacred Scriptures exhibit a continued grammatical impropriety almost from beginning to end, which would be ridiculous, if not impious to suppose. When God speaks to men, he must always be understood to speak after the manner of men, and when a pronoun signifying a single person is used, it can never mean a plurality of persons. Besides, it is an absurdity and a perversion of language, to affirm, that one God can ever mean more than one person. It might as well be said, that one man means several men, one angel several angels, as to assert, that one God means several divine persons.

* For the texts here quoted, and others of a similar kind, see Deut. vi. 4. Exod. xx. 2. Isai. xliv. 6, 8. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Mat. xix. 16, 17. Mark xii. 32.

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Having thus proved, that God is one person, or being, we shall next proceed to show, that the Father is that one person, and that the Godhead is restricted to him alone. "Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing; it is my Father, that honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God." "Jesus knowing, that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God." "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father." "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." "Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."* The introductory addresses, like the one last quoted, are numerous in the epistles, and it is observable, that the Holy Ghost is never mentioned with the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And, indeed, in all the quotations and references above, it must be obvious to the most superficial observer, how great is the difference between the style and mode of speaking of the apostles, and those of trinitarians. The language of trinitarians is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; but the language of the inspired apostles is God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no such expression, as God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, to be found in all the New Testament; but had the apostles known, that our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, were each God equal with the

* John viii. 54.—xiii. 3.—xvi. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.—xx. 17. 1 Thes. iii. 11. Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2 Cor. i, 1, 2, 3, 4. Gal. i, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Ephes. i. 1, 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 1, 2, 3.

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Father, would they not have declared the same? These are improvements in divinity for which we are indebted to more modern times.

From what has been said, it may safely be inferred, that we do not contradict the Scriptures by denying, that God is three persons, and asserting, that he is one person, or being only. Having refuted the charge of contradicting the Scriptures in denying the trinity, it might supersede the necessity of proving, that there is no such contradiction in denying, that Jesus Christ is truly, really, and properly God. For if the Father is the Supreme God, it is impossible, that any other being can be such in the same sense; and whoever can prove, in addition to this, that Jesus Christ is truly, really, and properly God, in the same sense as the Father, will prove, that there are two Gods, which is contrary to the christian religion. To strengthen our position we will proceed to adduce further testimony.

[These proofs, by which it is established, that Jesus Christ was derived from the Father, and subordinate to him, we must reserve for the next number.]

Ninth Letter to the Rev. Dr. Miller. On the theological Sentiments of Newton, Locke, and Watts.

SIR,

In the closing remarks of your Letter, strong disapprobation is expressed, that unitarians should presume to rank Newton, Locke and Watts, among their numbers. You intimate a belief, that in using this freedom with the two former, "those illustrious men are treated, with great injustice;" and "against placing the pious, the heavenly-minded Watts in such company, you feel

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constrained to enter your solemn protest." As I had enumerated these men among others, who were not believers in the trinity, and as you have been so prompt to question the accuracy, and even the justice of this enumeration, I propose to devote a few words to a consideration of this topic.

It may be premised, that unitarians do not recur to great names as affording any proof of the truth of their opinions. Error is not confined to the ignorant and unwise, nor is infallibility the prerogative of greatness. In religion we look for *proof* nowhere but in the Scriptures. The authority of great names ought, doubtless, to have its weight, not in convincing us in opposition to the word of God, but in confirming us in the conclusions to which we have come by a careful inquiry. Justice to ourselves, as well as to the cause we support, compels us to recur often to the names of distinguished unitarians. It is among the delights of our adversaries to impress it on the public mind, that our insignificance must necessarily prove us heretics; that our opinions are too novel to be true; and that the voice of all the learned, and wise, and good, speaks loudly against us. This string is harped upon incessantly. No matter how false and discordant its notes, so long as their tone is sufficiently high, and they produce the desired effect on the multitude. Prejudices grow out of these errors. We desire to lessen the evil by removing the cause. We wish our brethren to be enlightened, to know the truth, and to have as few occasions as possible for uncharitableness, and reproach. We are influenced by a double motive, therefore, in referring to distinguished names; first, the natural desire of showing that our faith has been embraced and supported by wise and excellent men; and secondly, the hope of softening the

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roughness, and tempering the violence of those, who indulge in a license of obloquy and disparagement, which, we are willing to believe, is more the result of ignorance, than of a wicked disposition.

Let it be further observed, that in the cases of Newton and Locke, the labour of proof belongs to trinitarians. These men have always been classed with unitarians; they have been perpetually quoted on that side of the question, nor have I ever heard of their authority being brought forward in favour of the trinity, or even of orthodoxy. Prove from their writings, or from the writings of their cotemporaries, or from any well established facts, that they were trinitarians, and the point will be settled. The persons, who manifest so lively a concern for what they profess to deem the injured reputation of these great men, have exhibited no proof to this effect. Until this be done, Newton and Locke must be considered unitarians, as they always have been. I am not disposed, however, to decline an investigation of some of the positive evidences of the fact. The inquiry must necessarily be confined to a narrow space.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first, who formally engaged in proving the spuriousness of the famous text of the three heavenly witnesses. 1 John v. 7; and also in showing that the received reading of 1 Tim. iii. 16, is a corruption.* This subject was discussed in two letters

* In regard to 1 Tim. iii. 16, Newton was of the same opinion as Dr. Samuel Clarke. Instead of *God manifest in the flesh*, he believed the true reading to be, *He who, or that which was manifest in the flesh* "All the old versions," says Dr. Clarke, "have it *qui* or *quod*. And all the ancient Fathers, though the copies of many of them have it now in the text itself, θεος, *Deus*, yet from the tenour of their comments upon it, and from their never citing it in the Arian controversy, it appears they always read it *qui* or *quod*." *Scripture*

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said to have been written to Le Clerc. The language and arguments are precisely such, as would be used by unitarians, and such as trinitarians of that day, before the controversy touching those passages had been much agitated, could not be supposed to have employed. In adverting to the testimony of Cyprian, Newton observes, that "he does not say the Father, the *Word*, and the Holy Ghost, as in 1 John, v. 7, but the Father, the *Son*, and the Holy Ghost, as it is in Baptism, *the place from which they at first* TRIED *to derive the trinity.*"* Do you believe this language ever escaped from a trinitarian? Instead of indicating any confidence in the doctrine of the trinity, does it not strongly imply that the advocates of this doctrine have TRIED in vain to find it in a text, to which they have universally resorted as a strong hold? The person, who can read these Letters with an unshaken conviction, that the author was not an antitrinitarian, must have a rule of deciding the meaning of a writer from his language, which few will apprehend.

In referring again to the text in John, Newton says, "Let them make good sense of it who are able. If it be said, that we are not to determine what is scripture, and what not, by our own private judgments, I confess it in places not controverted. *But in disputable points, I love to take up with what I can best understand. It is the temper of the hot and superstitious part of mankind, in matters of religion, to be fond of mysteries; and, for that reason, to like best what they understand least.* Such men use the apostle John as they please;

Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 88. Third Edit. Mills says, this text was never quoted as proof of Christ's divinity, till the year 380, and then first by Gregory Nyssen.—Gregorius Nyssenus primus omnium, &c.

* See Newton's Works, Horsley's Edition, vol. v. p. 488; or the Two Letters in a separate form, as they were printed in 1754.

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but I have that honour for him, as to believe, that he wrote good sense, and, therefore, take that sense to be his, which is the best, especially since I am defended in it by so great authority." It is readily admitted, that these words *might* be spoken by a trinitarian. It must nevertheless be granted, that it is a kind of language, which no one of that faith has been known to use. The sentiments it inculcates are peculiar to unitarians, and are continually attacked by their opponents with almost as much harshness, as their views of the trinity itself. The trinity is a mystery, and if that doctrine is to have the preference, which we "can best understand," who will ever be a trinitarian?*

When Sir Isaac Newton was Master of the Mint, the office of Assay Master was filled by Mr. Hopton Haynes. This gentleman was a unitarian, and wrote with much ability and learning a treatise on the subject, which has recently been several times republished.† Mr. Haynes, who was long and intimately acquainted with Newton, declared to a friend,‡ that "he did not believe our Lord's pre-existence, being a socinian, as we call it, in that article; and that Sir Isaac much lamented Dr. Clarke's

* In Newton's remarks on the Book of Revelations, he speaks as follows; "As the few and obscure prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were for the setting up of the christian religion, *which* ALL NATIONS *have since corrupted;* so the many and clear prophecies concerning the things to be done at Christ's second coming, are not only for predicting, but also for *effecting a recovery of the long-lost truth.*" What is the corruption here spoken of, and what is the long-lost truth? Read Priestley's History of Early Opinions, and of the Corruptions of Christianity, and you will discover the sentiments of unitarians on the subject, which I have no doubt were the sentiments of Newton.

† This work is called a *Scripture Account of the Attributes and Worship of God, and of the Character and Offices of Jesus Christ.*

‡ The Rev. Richard Baron, "a person of great probity and public spirit, and known by many valuable publications."

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embracing Arianism, which opinion he feared had been, and still would be, if maintained by learned men, a great obstruction to the progress of christianity."* This declaration is alone amply sufficient. It was made by a man who could not possibly mistake. I am aware of Magee's insinuations, that Haynes and Baron were *unitarians*, and therefore not to be trusted; but I am also aware of many other insinuations of his not less gross or illiberal. When unitarianism is concerned no man is more fruitful in sneers and low ridicule, none more barren in argument and fact. In the present instance, as in many others, his poisoned arrows rebound upon himself. As he has substituted sneers for reasons, it is plain enough that no reasons were at hand. An impartial and unbiassed writer has said of Haynes, in speaking of his general character, without allusion to his theological opinions, "that he always behaved himself highly worthy of the great trust reposed in him, being indefatigable and most faithful in the execution of his offices;" and adds, "We may conclude, from his being in the Mint, at the time Sir Isaac Newton presided there, and from his known piety and love of learned conversation, that he had frequent intercourse and enjoyed the good opinion of that excellent man."† The probability, that an intimacy and a similarity of opinion existed between them is also strengthened by the fact mentioned in Wetstein's Prolegomena, that Haynes translated the Two Letters above mentioned into Latin.

There is yet another argument directly in point, and in my mind an unanswerable one. It is well known,

* See the Preface to the 2d edition of Haynes's *Scripture Account*, p. vii.

† Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. ii, p. 140, 141, as cited by Dr. Carpenter, and in Mr. Aspland's Preface to the 4th edition of the *Scripture Account*.

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that Newton left several papers on theological subjects, which have never been permitted to come before the world. They were cautiously excluded from Horsley's large edition of his works. These papers have been said to contain more at large the author's views of the unitarian system. Nor has this report been contradicted by the persons who hold the papers in their possession. It was not contradicted by Horsley, who examined the papers, and declared them unsuitable for publication. What could Horsley find in any theological writings of Sir Isaac Newton, which he deemed proper to keep in the dark? This question has been answered in conformity with the common sense of mankind, by a writer, who cannot be supposed to have spoken from interested motives. "Newton's religious opinions were not orthodox. For example, he did not believe in the trinity. This gives us the reason why Horsley, the champion of the trinity, found Newton's papers unfit for publication. But it is much to be regretted, that they have never seen the light."*

I will only add, that Dr. Chalmers has confessed his belief in the unitarian sentiments of Newton—awkwardly enough, to be sure, but still it is a confession—and this, after making him not only the greatest and wisest philosopher, but the acutest and profoundest theologian, whom the world has seen.†

* Thompson's History of the Royal Society, p. 283.—Annals of Philosophy, vol. ii, p. 322; as quoted by Mardon.

† Compare the Preface to Dr. Chalmers' Astronomical Discourses with the second sermon in the course. See likewise Unitarian Miscellany, vol. i. p. 167.

For further information respecting the sentiments of Newton, consult Marsden's Letter to the Rev. Dr. Chalmers; and Carpenter's Examination of Magee's Charges against Unitarians and Unitarianism.

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Concerning the opinions of Locke I have but little to say. The main point in question is sufficiently settled by a single fact, which is, that public sentiment has invariably ranked him among unitarians, and no one has succeeded in proving this sentiment erroneous. I know what Magee and Bishop Burgess have *attempted* to do, and I also know what they have totally failed to accomplish. They were willing to believe, like yourself, that Locke was "treated with great injustice," by having unitarianism imputed to him, and they generously undertook the labour of freeing him from this imputation. They read his works, and no doubt with all the fidelity and zeal, which their concern for his reputation demanded. They made quotations, but to what did they amount? To nothing indeed, which advances their purpose. They have not been able to discover a fact, hint, or allusion, which warrants the inference, that Locke believed in a trinity. In relation to this doctrine, they have not quoted a syllable to which unitarians generally will not assent. Is not the conclusion from these particulars directly the contrary of that, which Magee and Burgess would establish. And if they have failed, who will undertake the task?*

Locke has written largely upon the christian religion. The primary object of his *Reasonableness of Christianity* was to ascertain the kind of faith necessary to make a man a christian. But in the course of this investiga-

* Prebendary Dennis gravely cited a work called, *Locke's Common place Book to the Bible*, as a proof that he was a trinitarian. Others, perhaps, may have been influenced by the same authority. This book was first published in 1763. It was afterwards enlarged, and by a species of pious imposition was sent out under the name of Mr. Locke. Notwithstanding it has always been known to be spurious, it is still published as Locke's, with a preface ascribed to him, which, as Bishop Law has said, "is neither sense nor English."

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tion he exhibits, with some degree of minuteness, his views of the christian dispensation. In his two *Vindications* he expresses his thoughts more at length, and dwells particularly on what his opponents called fundamentals, and charged him with omitting. This list of fundamentals is in close resemblance to the one you have drawn up, as containing articles essential to the faith of any person, who would be entitled to the name of christian. Locke denied, that any such articles were necessary, and maintained what he had asserted and proved in his Reasonableness of Christianity, that one essential article of faith only was preached by the Saviour and his apostles, namely, that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. Whoever professed this faith was considered a member of Christ's church. Locke has also left an elaborate paraphrase and commentary on four of St. Paul's Epistles. In all these writings nothing appears, which shows the author to have had any leaning towards the doctrine of the trinity, or any other of the doctrines of high orthodoxy. Does not this amount to a demonstration, that he believed in none of these things? Was it ever known, that a trinitarian has written expressly on the fundamental articles, without in any shape embracing the distinguishing doctrine of his faith? It is presumed not. Consult Locke's interpretation of those texts in the Epistles usually quoted in support of the trinity. In no case will you discover any tendency to this doctrine.*

* Examine particularly the famous text of Rom. ix. 5, which trinitarians consider so strong in their favour. Locke's paraphrase gives it a meaning wholly irrelevant to their purpose. Instead of the rendering of the common version, which reads as follows, "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever," Locke renders it, "Christ is come, he who is over all, God be blessed for ever."

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The facts here stated are conclusive. They constitute an argument, which can be overthrown only by positive evidence, that Locke was a trinitarian. Let this be produced, and the controversy will be at an end.

I have room for no more than two or three quotations from Locke's works. It will appear from these, however, that the *principles*, by which he was guided in explaining the religion of the Saviour, and interpreting the word of God, are in all respects the same as those of unitarians.

In the first place, he believed the truths revealed by Jesus to be adapted to the understanding; that all men, the simple as well as the wise, "are concerned in this religion, and ought to *understand it*, in order to their salvation." For thus declaring religion to be an intelligible thing, he drew upon him the censure and sneers of his adversary. In reply, he said, "I hope it is no derogation to the christian religion to say, that the fundamentals of it, that is, all that is necessary to be believed in it, by all men, is easy to be understood by all men. This I thought myself authorized to say, by the very easy and very intelligible articles insisted on by our Saviour and his apostles; which contain nothing but what could be understood by the bulk of mankind."* Now I would ask, whether the trinity be a "very easy and a very intelligible article," and whether it "contains nothing which may not be understood by the bulk of mankind?" I would also ask, whether the principles here assumed by

* *Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity;* Locke's Works, eleventh edition, Vol. vii. p. 176. See also Locke's views of this subject in the chapter on *Faith and Reason*, in his Essay on the Human Understanding, Book iv. c. 18.

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Locke be not at variance with those universally received and acted upon by trinitarians?*

Furthermore, do not all believers in the trinity consider this doctrine of the highest importance, and a necessary article of faith? Do they not all contend, that it was preached by the Saviour and his apostles? But Locke virtually denied both of these propositions. He asserted that Jesus and the apostles preached only one article as essential, which was the Messiahship of Jesus. Hear what he says in reply to his opponents, who charged him with being a socinian, because he omitted the trinity and its collateral doctrines. "Did he amiss," he asks, alluding to himself, "that he offered to the belief of those, who stood off, that and only that, which our Saviour and his apostles preached, for the reducing the unconverted world; and would any one think he in earnest went about to persuade men to be christians, who should use that as an argument to recommend the gospel, which he has observed men to lay hold on, as an objection against it? To urge such points of controversy, as necessary articles of faith, when we see *our Saviour and the apostles, in their preaching, urged them not as necessary to be believed to make men christians*, is, by our own authority, to add prejudices to prejudices, and to block

† In the year 1781, a book was published in England by a Mr. Milner, deploring the calamities, which were about to come upon the world, by introducing human reason into religion. Mr. Locke is made the great offender, and in alluding to him, the writer utters the following lamentations. "Reason has impertinently meddled with the gospel, and that with such overbearing credulity, as to darken it more and more; and rivers of tears would not suffice to bewail the increase of moral misery, which, since Mr. Locke's time, has pervaded these kingdoms." And again; "it was Mr. Locke, who first, unhappily, gave reason leave to intrude herself into the secrets of christianity."

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our own way to those men, whom we would have access to, and prevail upon."* Can any thing be plainer than this passage? He tells you, that he had not enforced the doctrines, for the omission of which he was charged with the heresy of socinianism, because, "our Saviour and the apostles urged them not as necessary to be believed, to make men christians." The trinity was one of these doctrines. What is the inference, if it be not, that Locke did not believe the trinity to have been preached by the Saviour and the apostles?"†

Some persons seem to have deceived themselves in regard to Locke's opinions, by not giving a proper attention to the object of his reasonings, especially in his two *Vindications*. When the *Reasonableness of Christianity* appeared, it was furiously attacked by Edwards, in

* *Vindication, &c.* Works, vol. vii. p. 164.

† I cannot forbear quoting in this place, a passage from Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*, which presents in clear terms the substance of his views respecting essential articles of faith. He states, "that above threescore years after our Saviour's passion, St. John knew nothing else required to be believed for the attaining of life, but that 'Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,'" and then goes on to add the following words;

"To this it is likely it will be objected by some, that to believe only that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, is but an historical, and not a justifying, or saving faith.

"To which I answer, that I allow to the makers of systems and their followers, to invent and use what distinctions they please, and to call things by what names they think fit. But I cannot allow to them, or to any man, an authority to make a religion for me, or to alter that which God hath revealed. And if they please to call the believing that, which our Saviour and his apostles preached, and proposed alone to be believed, an historical faith, they have their liberty; but they must have a care, how they deny it to be a justifying or saving faith, when our Saviour and his apostles have declared it so to be, and taught no other, which men should receive, and whereby they should be made believers unto eternal life; unless they can so far make bold with our Saviour, for the sake of their beloved systems, as

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a treatise called *Socinianism Unmasked*, and charged not only with inculcating socinianism, but even the desolating tenets of deism and atheism. The *Vindications* were written in reply to Edwards, and conducted in a masterly train of logical reasonings, aiming at one point only, which was to disprove the charge of a tendency to the peculiar tenets of socinianism, and to irreligion in the *Reasonableness of Christianity*. In doing this, Locke had no occasion to bring forward and explain his own opinions, or all the topics embraced in the controversy. It was his sole object to show the disingenuousness of his adversary in making charges, and drawing inferences, totally unwarranted by any thing in the work, which he was pretending to examine. It was no part of his purpose, to make known the tenets of his faith, but to show that the objections made against his

to say, that he forgot what he came into the world for, and that he and his apostles did not instruct people right in the way and mysteries of salvation.

"For that this is the sole doctrine pressed and required to be believed in the whole tenour of our Saviour's and his apostles' preaching, we have showed through the whole history of the Evangelists and the Acts. And I challenge them to show, that there was any other doctrine, upon their assent to which, men were pronounced believers or unbelievers, and accordingly received into the church of Christ, as members of his body, as far as mere believing could make them so; or else kept out of it. This was the only gospel article of faith, which was preached to them. And if nothing else was preached every where, the apostle's argument will hold against any other articles of faith to be believed under the gospel. 'How shall they believe that whereof they have not heard?' Rom. x. 14 For to preach any other doctrines necessary to be believed, we do not find that any body was sent." *Reasonableness of Christianity;* Works, vol. vii. p. 102.

It is not necessary to ask whether this is the language of trinitarians. See more in Locke's letter to Limborch on the unity of God Works, vol. x. p. 71.

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book, on account of its supposed irreligious tendency, were ill natured and unfounded.

Bishop Stillingfleet had the acuteness to discover, as he imagined, a secret attack on the trinity. even in the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. Locke, in his reply, does not say that he believes in the trinity, and that therefore the bishop's insinuations are false, but goes on to repel the charges, by showing that the book has nothing to do with the trinity, and is gratuitously dragged into the controversy. These facts explain the reason why Locke was less explicit on many topics, than would be expected, if he were explaining and defending his own tenets.*

According to bishop Law, there is much reason for

* The following extract from Locke's *Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester*, will give us no very indistinct notion of his views of the trinity.

"I presume your lordship, in your discourse in vindication of the doctrine of the trinity, intends to give it us as it has been received in the christian church. And I think your words, viz; 'it is the sense of the christian church, which you are bound to defend, and the particular opinions of your own,' authorise one to think so. But if I am to own it, as your lordship has there delivered it, I must own that I do not understand; for I confess your exposition of the sense of the church wholly transcends my capacity.

"If you require me to own it with an implicit faith, I shall pay that deference as soon to your lordship's exposition of the doctrine of the church, as any one's. But if I must understand and know what I own, it is my misfortune, and I cannot deny, that I am far from owning what you in that discourse deliver, as I can be far from expressing the most unintelligible thing that ever I read, to be the doctrine I own. Whether I make more use of my poor understanding in the case, than you are willing to allow every one of your readers, I cannot tell; but such an understanding as God has given me, is the best I have, and that which I must use in the apprehending what others say, before I can own the truth of it; and for this there is no help that I know." *Works*, vol. iv. p. 198.

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supposing Locke to have been a contributor to the *Unitarian Tracts*, published in England, near the close of the seventeenth century.* It is not easy, perhaps, to ascertain his precise opinions respecting the nature of Christ. Like the old socinians, and the generality of unitarians of the present day, he believed in the miraculous conception; but it will be a difficult thing to prove, that he believed in the simple humanity, or the worship of Christ, which were also two of the leading tenets of socinianism. Lardner considered him an Arian, and ranked him with Dr. John Taylor, as may be seen in his Letters on the Logos.† And, indeed, many of Locke's interpretations, contained in the Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles, seem to be founded on the Arian hypothesis. This is particularly true of the passage referred to by Lardner, where Locke speaks of the spiritual part of Christ being derived from God "by a divine extraction," which plainly shows, that in his highest nature, he considered him a derived being, and consequently subordinate to the Deity.‡ But this discussion is of little importance in the present connexion. It is enough, that Locke has always been accounted a unitarian, that his writings confirm this sentiment, and that no adequate evidence has been offered to the contrary.

We come next to the opinions of Watts, whom you seem peculiarly solicitous to rescue from the hands of unitarians. As the reasons you present for believing

* Preface to Locke's Works, p. vii.

† Lardner's Works, vol. xi. p. 116.

‡ See Locke's paraphrase and note on Romans i. 4. The note is as follows. "'According to the spirit of holiness', is here manifestly opposed to, 'according to the flesh,' in the foregoing verse, and so must mean that more pure and spiritual part in him, which, *by divine extraction*, he had immediately from God."

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him to have "lived and died a trinitarian," are for the most part irrelevant to the purpose, it will be needless to examine them in detail. They may all be summed up in this one position; that, as he was once a trinitarian, he must always have been such. You have proved, beyond contradiction, what no one has ever denied, or doubted; namely, that Watts at one period of his life was zealous in the trinitarian faith, and wrote much in its favour. On this point there is no disagreement. But here you stop short. The only important thing in the argument is left untouched. It is believed, that Watts changed his opinions during his lifetime, and at length went over to the unitarian faith. The reasons for this belief you have not disproved, nor even approached. All you have said, therefore, may be taken for granted, except your inferences; and with this concession, I will proceed, in few words, to state some of the facts, which confirm the unitarianism of Dr. Watts.*

* It was not contrary to the christianity of Watts, to search for the truth, and change his opinions when he found them erroneous. He did not entangle himself with creeds of men's invention, nor promise to *conform* to a system of faith, as the only true explication of scripture. This, he knew, would be stopping at once the channel of inquiry, and giving perpetual currency to all the errors, which the folly, ignorance, and selfishness of men, have entailed upon the world.

"I thank God," said he, "that I have learned to retract my former sentiments, and change them, when upon stricter search and review they appear less agreeable to the divine standard of faith.

"It doth not belong to such poor, imperfect beings as we are, to remain for ever immoveable in all the same opinions, that we have once indulged, nor to stamp every sentiment with immortality For a man to be obstinately tenacious of an old mistake, and incorrigibly fond of an obscure phrase or conception, because he has once admitted it, is the shame, and not the glory, of human nature."—*Preface to Dissertations relating to the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity.* Part II.

"How vain a presumption it is, with a pretence of divine authority, to impose mere human explications upon the consciences of men, and

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A letter is extant, which was written by the Rev. Samuel Merivale to Dr. Priestley, in which the sentiments of Dr. Lardner on the subject of Watts' opinions are expressed in the most unequivocal terms. In conversation with Mr. Merivale, as stated in the letter, this great man observed; "I think Dr. Watts never was an Arian, to his honour be it spoken. When he first wrote of the trinity, I reckon he believed three equal divine persons. But in the latter part of his life, for several years before his death, and before he was seized with an imbecility of his faculties, he was a *unitarian*. How he came to be so, I cannot certainly say; but I think it was the result of his own meditations on the Scriptures. He was very desirous to promote that opinion, and wrote a great deal upon the subject."

After this conversation, Mr. Merivale, wishing to obtain further information respecting Watts' unpublished papers, wrote a letter of inquiry to Dr. Lardner, from whom he received the following reply;

"I question whether you have any where in print Dr. Watts' last thoughts upon the trinity. They were known to very few. My nephew, Neal, an understanding gentleman, was intimate with Dr. Watts, and often with the family where he lived. Sometimes in an even-

to forbid them all the sacred blessings of especial communion in the gospel, unless they testify their assent to such a particular hypothesis, or scheme of explication, which the imposers confess to be human, and yet impose it in their own prescribed form of words.

"The persons, who are guilty of this uncharitable practice, may consecrate their impositions, and their excommunications, with holy names, and call them pure zeal for the divinity of Christ; but I suspect it will be found in the great day, to deserve no better a character than a mistaken zeal for the honour of Christ, mingled, perhaps, with zeal for the divinity of their own notions."—*Essay on the true Importance of any human Schemes to explain the sacred Doctrines of the Trinity.* Sec. III.

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ing, when they were alone, he would talk to his friends in the family, of his new thoughts concerning the person of Christ, and their great importance; and that, if he should be able to recommend them to the world, it would be the most considerable thing, that ever he performed. My nephew, therefore, came to me, and told me of it, and that the family was greatly concerned to hear him talk so much of the importance of these sentiments. I told my nephew, that Dr. Watts was right in saying they were important, but I was of opinion that he was unable to recommend them to the public, because he had never been used to a proper way of reasoning on such a subject. So it proved. My nephew being executor, had the papers, and showed me some of them. Dr. Watts had written a good deal, but they were not fit to be published. *Dr. Watts' Last Thoughts were* COMPLETELY UNITARIAN "*

These facts are too plain and conclusive to need comment. They rest on the authority of Lardner, and they could not rest on a higher. He barely stated what he saw and knew. Prove Lardner to have been guilty of a deliberate falsehood, or mistaken in a case where he had every possible opportunity of knowing the truth, and you will invalidate his testimony. Till this be done, no one can rightfully refuse his assent to the position it establishes; which is, that the unpublished papers of Watts clearly showed him to have been a unitarian.

But we need not recur to unpublished writings. Enough may be found in print to convince us, that he was not a trinitarian, whatever else he may have been. In his *Solemn Address to the Deity* he speaks as follows;

* See the whole of Mr. Merivale's Letter, in Belsham's Memoirs of Lindsey, p. 216.

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"Dear and blessed God, hadst thou been pleased, *in any one plain scripture*, to have informed me which of the different opinions about the holy trinity, among the contending parties of christians, had been true, thou knowest with how much zeal, satisfaction and joy, my unbiassed heart would have opened itself to receive and embrace the divine discovery. Hadst thou told me plainly, *in any single text*, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three real distinct persons in the divine nature, I had never suffered myself to be bewildered in so many doubts, nor embarrassed with so many strong fears of assenting to the mere inventions of men, instead of divine doctrine; but I should have humbly and immediately accepted thy words, so far as it was possible for me to understand them, as the only rule of my faith. Or hadst thou been pleased to express and include this proposition in the several scattered parts of thy book, from whence my reason and conscience might with ease find out, and with certainty infer this doctrine, I should have joyfully employed all my reasoning powers, with their utmost skill and activity, to have found out this inference, and engrafted it into my soul.

"But how can such weak creatures ever take in so strange, so difficult, and so abstruse a doctrine as this, in the explication and defence whereof, multitudes of men, even men of learning and piety, have lost themselves in infinite subtleties of disputes, and endless mazes of darkness. And can this strange and perplexing notion of three real persons going to make up one true God, be so necessary and so important a part of that christian doctrine, which, in the Old Testament and the New, is represented as so plain and so easy, even to the meanest understandings?"

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Three things are obvious from these extracts. First, that Watts did not believe the trinity, as usually understood, to be "plainly taught in any single text;" secondly, that in his mind it was not so expressed in the Scriptures at large, as to be intelligible to "reason and conscience;" and thirdly, that the "strange and perplexing notion of three real persons going to make up one true God," is not a "necessary and important part of the christian doctrine," whatever may be thought of its reality. Is there a trinitarian of the present day, who will assent to either of these propositions? It was a favourite opinion at the council of Nice, and for many ages after, that the trinity was not contained in the Scriptures, but taught by tradition. It has never been known, however, that Dr. Watts had a partiality for traditions, or that it was common with him to believe in doctrines, which his "reason and conscience" could not find in the Scriptures.

Hear what he says in his *Faithful Inquiry*, respecting the word *person*, as applied to the three parts of the trinity.

"Those writers, who call the sacred three by the name of three *persons*, do not assert or maintain, that this very word or expression of three persons, is found in Scripture, nor is the word *person expressly applied to them all three.*

"A distinct person, in the full and proper sense of the word among men, must be a distinct spirit; for a distinct person requires at least another distinct consciousness, with another distinct will, which seems to infer another different spirit. *And surely the Deity is not made up of three such distinct and different spirits.*

"Besides, it is sufficiently evident, that in the language of Scripture, and in the writings of the Jewish

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nation, those things, which are not strictly and properly *persons*, are often represented in a personal manner, as Wisdom, Law, Righteousness, Charity. And, therefore, the Sacred Three may be called three persons, or at least, *Three Scriptural Persons*, I hope, without offence, and without entering into the tedious, learned, and philosophical difficulties about the word person."*

What is the import of these passages? Certainly not, that the Sacred Three are distinct, personal agents. They are not three beings, who have each a "distinct consciousness and will." That is, they are not distinct beings in any sense. They are "scriptural persons." But what is a scriptural person? The writer has told us, that he understands by this term, the same as Wisdom, Law, Righteousness, when personified in the Scriptures. According to this sense, the three persons of the Deity are personifications of his modes of action. There is no spirit, or agent, distinct from the one true God. His unity is left untouched, and no unitarian would dissent from the substance of the views here taken.

In speaking further of the nature of Christ, Watts says, "This second person, this man Christ Jesus, has the true God united to him, or dwelling in him, in a peculiar manner; that is, the man Jesus Christ is assumed by the great God, into so near and intimate a union with himself, that they are often represented as one complex person, or personal agent. The man Jesus Christ is the inferiour agent or medium of the great God, who acteth whatsoever he pleases in and by the man Jesus Christ."† These views, in every important res-

* *Faithful Inquiry after the ancient and original Doctrine of the Trinity, taught by Christ and his Apostles*, p. 19, 20.

† *Ibid*, p. 24.

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pect, are those of unitarians. They believe, that "the man Jesus Christ was the inferiour agent or medium of the great God," that the union between them was "so near and intimate," that Christ spoke, and taught, and acted in exact conformity with the divine will, and that all he said has the same truth and authority, as if God himself had spoken. They believe, as well as Watts, that Christ was *inferiour* to the Deity, and acted in all things by divine influence, light, and strength.

Attend, also, to some remarks of Watts on the Holy Spirit. After intimating, that "the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, when it speaks of things after the ascension of Christ, very generally, or for the most part means, that *power* or *influence* of the eternal spirit of God, *which proceedeth from the Father*," he goes on to add,

"If the Holy Spirit were really a true and proper person, it would be as difficult to account for all these, and as many more expressions of scripture, which cannot possibly be ascribed to a proper person; and if in some places these impersonal expressions, or in other places the personal expressions, must be figurative, why may not my explication of them do as well as the contrary? And thus the spirit of God need *not any where be construed into a real, proper, distinct person.*

"I know not any place in scripture, which requires us to make express personal addresses, either of prayer, or of praise. unto the Spirit.

"Surely if praises or prayers were necessary to be offered distinctly to the Holy Spirit, 'tis very strange, that of all the writers of the New Testament, not one of them should give us some hint of it in precept, instruction, or example; but neither Matthew, Mark

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Luke nor John, Paul nor Peter, James nor Jude have left us any thing whence we can infer it."*

Now, if there be any meaning in words, can we infer from this language, that Watts believed the Holy Spirit to be a distinct being, equal in power and duration to God the Father? On the contrary, could he express in more decided terms his disbelief of the personality of the Holy Spirit, or of the propriety of its receiving worship and praise? What kind of faith in the trinity is that, which rejects the separate personal existence, and the worship of the Holy Spirit? To call a man a trinitarian, with such a faith, is contradictory and absurd.

I am not attempting to exhibit a general system of Watts's theological opinions. In some respects they were peculiar, but these peculiarities are not concerned in the present discussion. I aim only to prove, that he was not a trinitarian, or that he did not believe in the existence of three equal, and separate persons, beings, agents, or essences, in the Deity. On the testimony of Lardner, and especially on Watts's own writings as quoted above, the argument may safely rest, without danger of being destroyed or weakened.

You refer to Watts's Psalms and Hymns, as testifying to his trinitarianism. Can you be ignorant of the fact, that he was desirous, long before his death, of suppressing or altering these, but was prevented by circumstances wholly beyond his control? He had sold the copyright, and could not recover it. This he states as the reason why he was compelled to desist from any attempt to make such alterations, as his change of sentiments would seem to require.†

* *Faithful Inquiry, &c.* p. 30, 32.

† In writing to Mr. Tomkins, on the subject of his Hymns, Watt says, "I might tell you, that of all the books I have written, that

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With these short hints and extracts, I am willing to leave it to the judgment and candour of every impartial reader to decide, whether I committed a very heinous offence in placing even "the pious and heavenly minded Watts in such company," as that of Newton, Locke, Lardner, Whitby, Lindsey, and others of well known piety and excellence, and of similar theological sentiments.

I have now done with your Letter, although a very important part of the subject, which connects itself with the views you have taken, remains untouched. A partial examination only has been made of the moral influence and advantages of unitarianism, compared with calvinism. I propose to pursue the subject, particularly as it regards the trinity and atonement, and that I may not be obliged to go out of the track already commenced, I hope you will allow me to address to you two or three letters on these topics. My next will be on the practical influence of a belief in the trinity.

Yours

A UNITARIAN OF BALTIMORE.

particular copy is not mine. I sold it for a trifle to Mr. Lawrence, near thirty years ago, and his posterity make money of it to this day, and I can scarce claim a right to make any alteration in the book which would injure the sale of it."

Again, he replied to Mr. Grove, who suggested alterations, "that *he should be glad to do it*, but it was out of his power, for he had parted with the copy, and the bookseller would not suffer any such alteration." See *Monthly Repository*, vol. viii. p. 770, 771.

Many particulars respecting the theological opinions of Watts, may be seen in Belsham's *Memoir of Lindsey*, p. 216.—*Scriptures* in the *Month. Rep.* [vol. viii. pp. 683, 715, 768.] on a publication by Mr. Palmer, entitled, *Dr. Watts no Socinian.*—*Christian Disciple*, vol. ii. New Series, p. 461; and vol. iii. p. 190.—The whole of the *Solemn Address to the Deity* is contained in the *Christian Reformer*, vol. i. p. 113.

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Chaplain in Congress.

The members of the House of Representatives in Congress, at the commencement of their present session, made choice of a person for chaplain, whose religious sentiments were known to be unitarian. This choice has produced much excitement among the enemies of what we think the true faith. If we may judge from the strain of remarks, in which they have indulged in many of the papers and other publications of the country, we must suppose they consider it not only an evidence of the deplorable religious indifference of the Representatives in Congress, but an omen of the greatest national calamity. This solicitude is no doubt prompted by pious motives, and therefore deserves our sympathy. We cannot work ourselves up, however, to that sense of danger, which some have expressed with so much pathos, and such lively symptoms of alarm. We have no fears connected with this subject; but we rely on the wisdom and guidance of God, to employ such means for the diffusion of truth and the principles of a pure religion, as will be most effectual.

Nowhere, we presume, has the tocsin been sounded with so much vehemence, and eager promptness, as in the city of Washington. Many of the pulpits were for a time converted into theatres of vituperation against unitarians, and the tabernacles of the holy God were made to resound with the voice o passion and anathema. And what is still more strange, this is called religion, even in a christian land. In our Saviour's time, religion consisted in humble piety, love to God and man, and in the exercise of all the kind and gentle affections towards our brethren. *Sed tempora mutantur.*

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We have been led into these remarks by a singular pamphlet, which has recently made its appearance, purporting to be a "Letter to the Right Reverend Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Maryland, and an Address to the Congregation of St. John's Church in the City of Washington; by the Rev. William Hawley, Rector of said Church." The Right Reverend Bishop, it seems, had heard strange reports of the Reverend Mr. Hawley's preaching, and wrote him a letter on the occasion, whether by way of admonition or inquiry, does not appear. At all events, a reply was written, and with this reply, the public has been favoured in the above mentioned pamphlet.

We have no room or any comments on this letter to the Bishop. The writer enters into the concerns of the Chaplains, with a tone of complaint and dissatisfaction, and expresses himself much aggrieved at sundry things, with which, as far as we can perceive, he has nothing to do, nor any other person, except the Representatives themselves. We have never learnt, that the members of Congress consider themselves under his special patronage and protection, while in the city of Washington; or that they feel bound by any duty to their constituents, or their own consciences, to consult him in the choice of their Chaplains. In our minds, it would be wise, therefore, to let them manage their own affairs, as well in religion, as in the civil and political interests of the nation.

Appended to the letter is a part of a discourse, which Mr. Hawley delivered to his congregation on the sabbath after the election of Chaplain in the House of Representatives. We shall do no more than present our readers with two or three extracts. As a whole, it is one of the most extraordinary specimens of ignorance,

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misconception, and erroneous statement, which we recollect ever to have witnessed. Our earnest prayer is, that such of our opponents, as think it their duty to preach and write against unitarians, would also deem it a part of their duty to learn the truth, that they may at least save themselves from the folly of making such gross blunders, as they are perpetually committing, although they may not find it in their hearts to be any the more sparing of their censures.

Mr. Hawley begins by asserting, that unitarians "deny the fall of man, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit upon the heart." This assertion is radically untrue. They deny neither. They believe in the fall of man, as much as any trinitarian. They believe in the divinity of Christ, not that he was God, but that he was a divine person, clothed with divine honours, invested with divine powers, and sent to perform divine works, which none but God, or a being actuated by the wisdom and the special influence of God, could perform. They hold to the influence of the Holy Spirit on the Saviour, the apostles, and all sincere and faithful christians. We repeat, then, that the above sweeping assertion is untrue.

In another place, the preacher says, "With respect to the sacraments of the church, if the declarations of their teachers are to be believed, they are considered of no importance." This is so glaringly incorrect, that we are astonished any man should be willing to risk his reputation for veracity, or even good intentions, on such a statement. It is well known to all, who know any thing on the subject, that unitarians pay as much reverence to the appointed ordinances of the christian religion, and are as habitual in their practice of them, as any other denomination of christians.

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"In every point of view," continues the preacher, "in which the subject can be presented for your consideration, unitarians occupy the same ground with Mahometans, Jews, and infidels, and have no more right to claim the name of christian than either of them.

"Their system, so far as can be ascertained, makes void the institutions of God, overthrows the whole plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, and renders nugatory all the obligations of the holy obedience of faith in a crucified Saviour.

"No matter, therefore, what may be the moral character of the individual, whom the members of the House have elected for their chaplain; no matter what may be his literary attainments; if his faith be wrong, all is wrong.

"With respect to the former, his character, I am informed, stands fair; and as to the latter, he is esteemed a young man of handsome attainments, and of more than ordinary promise. Yet, after all, in regard to his qualifications as a divine, and his theological views, they might with the same propriety have chosen for that office, that distinguished man, whose bones have lately been transported to Europe, had he been alive, Thomas Paine."

These examples, we presume, will be enough. They exhibit a favourable specimen of the whole, both in point of truth and manner. It is no pleasant duty to expose misrepresentation, or to repeat low thoughts and vulgar allusions, which have been employed in speaking of sacred things. We have condescended to this task only in defence, and we hope this will be a sufficient apology.

Spirit of Orthodoxy.

Under this head we have, in a former number, given a curious specimen of the kind of language, which the religious principles of an orthodox preacher could allow him to use. We propose occasionally to select others from various sources, of a similar description. They will serve the purpose of showing our readers the influence of certain principles on the understanding and the

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feelings, and at the same time convince them how important it is on our part to persevere in every laudable attempt to enlighten the ignorance, which is so prone to misrepresent the objects of our faith, to depreciate our characters, and mistake our motives. The following extracts are from a periodical work, published in the city of Washington.

"The atheist, the deist, and the unitarian, are all enemies of the universal church, contending for the subversion of the essential articles of the creed of all other denominations."

"An enemy that can live only upon the vitals of christianity, and can flourish but amidst the ruins of her churches, is now endeavouring with a resolute and noisy struggle, to erect her daring front; and by collecting to her ranks a motley group of infidels of every degree and kind, who care not by what name they go, so that they oppose the religion of the Bible, is threatening, in her vaunting menaces, to plant her standard upon the very citadel of orthodoxy, and erect a statue to her name in every temple of christendom. Her name is unitarianism."

"Of so little consequence does it seem to the members of this sect, whether they believe one thing or another, after acknowledging those first principles, which the light of nature teaches, so that they only reject the doctrine of the trinity, and those other truths of the gospel, which make u the great distinctive character of the christian religion, that, in reading the *Abstract of Unitarian Belief*, we have no security for its reception by a single unitarian besides its author; and in grounding an argument upon it in opposition to unitarianism, we may find, that we are doing little more in reality, than contending with the editor of the Miscellany."

"It (unitarianism) is a system, which ancient hereties *would* have made, could their infidelity have been unshackled by the clear investigations of apostolic ages, and unarrested at every step by a clear memento of something that an apostle spoke. It is a system, which a man ought to make in obedience to the conclusions of reason, when once he has laid aside the doctrine of our Saviour's divinity; but which the ancient hereties, born in times so near the days of Christ, and surrounded by traditions in support of what the Scriptures related of Christ, had not the hardihood to maintain, or the daring to invent."

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Intelligence from Ohio.

We have spoken of the excitement to which some persons have allowed themselves to be aroused by the choice of a Chaplain in Congress. To show the kind of sympathy, which exists on this subject among a certain class, we publish the following extract from a letter lately written by a gentleman in Ohio.

"The election of Mr. Sparks to the place he now occupies has been a circumstance highly propitious to the cause of unitarianism. The orthodox, on hearing of the appointment, took the alarm, and the pulpits have since continued to ring with the most rancorous declamation against what are called the pernicious doctrines of unitarianism, while the whole body of congress have been bitterly aspersed for filling an office at their disposal with a person holding to these doctrines, and whose situation affords so much facility to the wide dissemination of his opinions. These anathematizing and vituperative discourses have an effect upon the audience quite contrary to that intended by the preachers. Instead of exciting aversion to those reprobated tenets, they have the effect to stimulate the curiosity of the hearers to inquire for themselves, and to know with more certainty the real sentiments of unitarians, and the evidence by which they were supported."

A Letter from a Gentleman in Virginia, and an article on the *Testimony of Scripture concerning our Lord*, will appear hereafter.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

AND

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

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The principal object proposed in the present work, is to set forth the doctrines, and inculcate the truths of the christian religion, as they are usually understood by Unitarians. It is published monthly, in numbers, each number containing not less than thirty-six pages.

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THE

UNITARIAN MISCELLANY

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No. XVI.] APRIL, 1822. [Vol. II.

Letter from a Gentleman in Virginia.

To the Editor.

SIR,

If the experience of an obscure individual can be deemed worthy of a place in your little work, it is cheerfully offered. I give it also with the hope, that some one of the multitude, whose minds are warped by the misrepresentations of the bigot, or devotee, may, like me, be led to reflection, and instead of receiving the prejudices of any sect for gospel truths, may judge for himself concerning "the one thing needful."

I was educated in the doctrines of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and my mother, a truly pious christian, spared no pains to inculcate those particular tenets, which she so zealously believed. I had the misfortune to lose her at an early age, but her kind admonitions were already deeply impressed upon my heart. Having attained the age of manhood, I began to weigh more deliberately the religion I professed. My Bible was not only read, but studied. Left now to judge for myself, not only the form of worship, but many of the creeds and doctrines of our church, appeared to me unwarranted by scripture, irrational, and inconsistent. But of all

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others, that of the trinity most puzzled and confounded me. That there should be three persons, yet only one God; three minds, three wills, three distinct beings, yet one great I AM; this I could not comprehend, much less believe.

Did I ask an explanation of these difficulties from the heads of the church, or those whom I thought best capable of satisfying my inquiries, I was answered, that these things were a great mystery, not intended to be understood, that I ought not to pry too closely into those things, which God did not see fit to reveal, and that enough was sufficiently plain for salvation. By such replies as these, you will readily acknowledge I was left as much in the dark as before. Tossed upon a sea of doubt and perplexity, often was I driven to the very brink of infidelity and absolute skepticism. But at this result my mind always ultimately revolted. Finding no relief from the church in which I was educated, I resolved to inquire into the creeds of other sects. The calvinistic views I was compelled utterly to reject, as likewise all others, which maintained the trinity. The tenets of the New Jerusalem church for a time arrested my attention, but did not convince.

In this unsettled, doubting, half-believing state, I continued, until a few weeks past I accidentally met with the third number of your Miscellany. I must here digress to observe, that it was only about two years since, soon after the erection of the First Independent church of Baltimore, while on a visit to that city, that I first heard the unitarians spoken of; but in such a manner, as served to prejudice me very strongly against the whole sect. I was informed, that unitarian and deist were only different words of the same meaning; that unitarians and deists both acknowledged one God, and

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both "denied the Lord that bought them;" and that they ascribed not half the sanctity to our Saviour, which a Turk ascribes to his prophet; and a hundred other absurdities, which I shall not take the trouble to repeat. To return, therefore, when I first cast my eye on your little pamphlet, it was the title, which more particularly attracted my attention. "The Unitarian Miscellany and *Christian* Monitor." Strange, thought I, that the name of him, whom they utterly deny, should be adopted as a title. Impelled by curiosity, perhaps, more than any other motive, I was induced to read it; and that day I shall ever consider as the most important of my life. I shall not occupy your time by descanting on the pleasure I took in the perusal of it. I soon after had the good fortune to meet with the two first numbers, as also a Sermon preached at the Ordination of the Rev. Jared Sparks. These have entirely dispelled my doubts, the stumbling block of trinitarianism is removed, and a new light has burst upon my mind. I have now a more clear and rational view of christianity, than was ever before presented to me. No longer am I forbidden to *search into the mysteries of God*, but taught to exercise my reason, cultivate the "talent" that is given me, and apply at the fountain head for a solution of all difficulties. The doctrines of the trinity, original sin, and predestination, to me the most revolting of all, alike dwindle into insignificance. A just and rational belief is substituted for that, which was crude and unintelligible.

I will cheerfully assist in the circulation of your truly valuable "Christian Monitor," in gratitude for the benefit I have derived from it, and through zeal for the cause; "for if some stop be not put to the absurdities of calvinism, and those doctrines of the dark ages are still

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suffered to pass, as christian doctrines, the fearful result will be, that the enlightened men of our country will be infidels, and the ignorant superstitious." F.

Virginia, Feb. 15, 1822.

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*Rev. Mr. Eastin's Protest.**

We now proceed to show from the Scriptures, that our Lord Jesus Christ was derived from the Father, and subordinate to him.

John says, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself." John v. 26. Is not this passage sufficient alone to prove, that Jesus Christ is a being derived from the Father? For life, which is the great principle of existence and action, was *given* to him by the Father; and if given, is it not derived from him that gave it? Certainly it is. He, who has his being from another, cannot be equal to him from whom he receives it. Again, "Jesus said unto them, if God were your father, ye would love me, for I *proceeded* forth and came from God." John viii. 42. What can this mean, if not, that Christ was derived from the Father? These declarations of our Lord Jesus Christ so clearly prove his derivation, and consequent subordination, that their force can in no way be weakened without at the same time rendering his own words altogether unmeaning.

But we will add a few other texts, which enforce the same point. "I came down from heaven not to do

* We commenced this protest in our last number. We now add the remainder.

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mine own will, but the will of him, that *sent* me." John vi. 38. "He that *sent* me is true, and I speak to the world those things, which I have heard of him." viii. 26 "*I do nothing of myself;* but as my Father *hath taught* me, I speak these things." Verse 28. "Neither came I of myself, but he sent me." Verse 42. "*I have not spoken of myself,* but the Father which sent me, he *gave me* a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak." xii. 49. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." xiv. 10. "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." v. 31. "All things *are delivered* unto me of my Father." Matth. xi. 27. Many other texts of a similar description might be quoted, but these are enough. If that being, who was *sent,* and *taught,* who could *do nothing of himself,* who acted from a command that *was given* to him, if that being was not inferiour to the supreme God, not in one particular only, but in all respects, it will be impossible to frame language so as to express an inferiority.*

A great portion of the New Testament might be transcribed in proof of the subordination of the Lord Jesus Christ to his God and Father. He has openly, explicitly, and repeatedly avowed, that he was sent of God, that the works he wrought were in obedience to the Father, and by the power of the Father that dwelt in him. Is it not strange, that men, who profess to love him and to rely on him for salvation, should, notwithstanding what he has said proving his subordination to the Father, declare they will not trust him, for their Saviour, unless he be the Eternal God, and that they

* We have omitted for want of room a large number of passages, which were very appropriately cited by Mr. Eastin.

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should proceed to exclude from their fellowship and privilege, all those, who will not agree to say as they say, in contradiction to their own consciences and the express declarations of the blessed Jesus?

We are really and truly willing to live in harmony, love, and fellowship with our christian brethren, as we have done heretofore, as brethren equal in the gospel; but we cannot suffer our understandings to be enslaved, nor allow any man, or body of men, to dictate to us what we must believe in order to be saved. We do hereby declare, before God and men, that we reject all such attempts as antichristian tyranny.

We herewith annex the outlines of what we conceive to be a scriptural belief on the subject above discussed, for the satisfaction of such, as may, amidst the popular clamour, be desirous of knowing the truth in regard to our faith.

We believe, that there is one self-existent God, and that he is one Being, supreme and eternal; that he is the source of all power, infinite, unchangeable, and the author of all other beings and things.

We believe Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God, who was promised to the fathers of old, of whom Moses and the prophets did write, and that God sent him into the world to save sinners.

We believe, that God gave him all power in heaven and in earth, that the Father loveth the Son and committeth all judgment to him, that by the power he received he wrought all his miracles on earth, that he died on the cross, and that by his death he made an ample atonement for the sins of his people.

We believe, that God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, far above all principalities

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and powers, and as a prince and a Saviour he gives repentance and remission of sins.

We believe, that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and men, and that there is no other name, under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

But we do not believe him to be that God with whom he mediates; for, with the apostle, we believe there is one God, and one mediator. Nor do we believe, that God is a mediator with himself; but that Jesus Christ is the only mediator with God in the behalf of man.

We are in peace with all men as far as we know; and may the God of peace and love rest and abide with you, and incline your hearts to do and act for his glory, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Parable against Persecution.

The following beautiful parable closes Jeremy Taylor's admirable work on the *Liberty of Prophesying*, and contains a moral, which many christians of the present day might apply to themselves, with no little profit to their charity and christian spirit. It was somewhat enlarged, and perhaps improved, by Dr. Franklin, in his very ingenious imitation of scripture language. It is presented below in both forms.

From Jeremy Taylor.

I end with a story, which I find in the Jews' books. When Abraham sat at his tent door, according to his custom, waiting to entertain strangers, he espied an old man, stooping and leaning on his staff, weary with age

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and travel, coming towards him, who was an hundred years of age. He received him kindly, washed his feet, provided supper, caused him to sit down; but observing that the old man eat and prayed not, nor begged for a blessing on his meat, asked him, why he did not worship the God of heaven? The old man told him that he worshipped the fire only, and acknowledged no other god; at which Abraham grew so zealously angry, that he thrust the old man out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night, and an unguarded condition.

When the old man was gone, God called to Abraham, and asked him where the stranger was? He replied, I thrust him away, because he did not worship thee. God answered him, I have suffered him these hundred years, although he dishonoured me, and couldst not thou endure him one night, when he gave thee no trouble? Upon this, saith the story, Abraham fetched him back again, and gave him hospitable entertainment, and wise instruction. "Go thou and do likewise," and thy charity will be rewarded by the God of Abraham.

From Dr. Franklin.

1. And it came to pass, after these things, that Abraham sat in the door of his tent, about the going down of the sun.

2. And behold, a man bent with age, coming from the way of the wilderness, leaning on a staff.

3. And Abraham rose and met him, and said unto him, Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night; and thou shalt arise early in the morning, and go on thy way.

4. And the man said, Nay, for I will abide under this tree.

5. But Abraham pressed him greatly; so he turned,

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and they went into the tent; and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat.

6. And when Abraham saw, that the man blessed not God, he said unto him, Wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, Creator of heaven and earth?

7. And the man answered and said, I do not worship thy God, neither do I call upon his name; for I have made to myself a god, which abideth always in my house, and provideth me with all things.

8. And Abraham's zeal was kindled against the man, and he rose, and fell upon him, and drove him forth with blows into the wilderness.

9. And God called unto Abraham, saying, Abraham, where is the stranger?

10. And Abraham answered and said, Lord, he would not worship thee, neither would he call upon thy name, therefore have I driven him out from before my face into the wilderness.

11. And God said, have I borne with him these hundred and ninety and eight years, and nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion against me, and couldst not thou, who art thyself a sinner, bear with him one night?

12. And Abraham said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot against his servant; lo, I have sinned, forgive me, I pray thee.

13. And Abraham arose, and went forth into the wilderness, and diligently sought for the man, and found him, and returned with him to the tent; and when he had entreated him kindly, he sent him away on the morrow with gifts.

14. And God spake again unto Abraham, saying, For this thy sin thy seed shall be afflicted four hundred years in a strange land.

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15. But for thy repentance, will I deliver them, and they shall come forth with power, and with gladness of heart, and with much substance.

The Testimony of Scripture concerning our Lord.

The character of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the word of God, has for many ages been viewed in different and opposite lights. That it should be so, must be a source of much regret to every sincere christian. And why is it so? Is there any thing dark or ambiguous in the language used by our Saviour respecting himself? Is it not inconsistent with the ideas we entertain of the only wise God, to suppose that he would give us a revelation in language, whose meaning is wholly different from that, which we invariably attach to the same language in every other case? Is it not, at least, fair to understand Father and Son to mean the same thing in the Bible, as they do every where else? Our inquiry, at present, is simply respecting the person of Jesus, as distinct from that of God—the being who was sent, from him by whom he was sent. It may be of use to listen, with unprejudiced minds, to the plain voice of scripture; to examine the many texts, most of them from our Saviour himself, which teach, in unequivocal terms, his subordination to the Father of Spirits, and that he is a derived, dependent being. Connecting these expressions with the circumstance, that he always prayed to the Father, and directed us to offer our petitions exclusively to the same Being, that he now sits on the right hand of God to *intercede* for us, that we have a right to infer the meaning

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of the words Father and Son from the analogy of every thing with which we are acquainted; viewing this collected testimony in all its bearings, I know not how the equality of the Son of God to God himself, can be held as a doctrine of scripture.

"All things are *delivered* unto me of my Father."—Matt. xi. 27. "To sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."—Matt. xx. 23. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as *I* will, but as *thou* wilt."—Matt. xxvi. 39. "All power is *given* unto me in heaven and in earth."—Matt. xxviii. 18. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me."—Luke xxii. 29. "The only *begotten* of the Father."—John i. 14. "The first-born of every creature."—Col. i. 15. "For God *giveth* not the Spirit by measure unto him."—John iii. 34. "Verily, verily, I say unto you; the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth; he hath *committed* all judgment unto the Son, for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* unto the Son to have life in himself, and hath *given* him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just; because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. For the works which the Father hath *given* me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."—John v. 25—44.

"Him hath God the Father *sealed*—for I came down

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from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me—the living Father hath sent me."—John vi. 27, 38, 57. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.—He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true.—I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not; but I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.—I go unto him that sent me."—John vii. 16, 18, 28, 29, 33. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath *taught* me, I speak these things, and he that sent me, is with me; the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him—I *proceeded forth and came from God*; neither came I of myself, but he sent me—I seek not mine own glory—if I honour myself, my honour is nothing; it is my Father that honoureth me." John viii. 28, 29, 42, 50, 54. "I must work the works of him that sent me." John 9, 4. "This commandment have I received of my Father. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all. Say ye of him, whom the Father hath *sanctified*, and *sent* into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said I am the son of God?" John x. 18, 29, 36. "That they may believe that thou hast sent me." John ii. 42. "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak." John xii. 49. "I go unto my Father; for my Father is greater than I." John xiv. 28. "As I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love—all things that I have *heard* of my Father, I have made known unto you." John xv. 10, 15. "And in that day *ye shall ask me nothing*. Whatsoever ye

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shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." John xvi. 23.

"As thou hast *given* him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast *given* him. Thine they were, and thou *gavest* them me. I have given unto them the words that thou *gavest* me, and they have received them, and have known surely that *I came out* from thee, and have believed, that thou didst send me. Keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast *given* me, that they may be one, as we are. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world. The glory which thou *gavest* me, I have given them,"—John xvii. 2, 6, 8. 11, 18, 22. "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."—John xx. 17—21. "God hath *made* him both Lord and Christ."—Acts ii. 36. "Him hath God *exalted* with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour."—Acts v. 31. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath *ordained*."—Acts xvii. 31. God hath raised him from the dead."—Rom. x. 9. "At the coming of Christ, then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom unto God, even the Father—*then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*" 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

Such is the language of Scripture. What does it teach? That the Son is equal to the Father? That he, who is said repeatedly to be "sent," "sealed," "filled," "exalted," "ordained," "anointed," "sanctified," whose "power is given," whose "doctrine is not his own," whose very "will" is subject to another, that this being is the self-existing God, by whom all these gifts are conferred,

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that he is *equal* to him whom he declares to be "greater" than himself? Do all these things mean the opposite of what they seem to mean? Then it is better, infinitely better, to close our Bible, for truly we see not what dependence can be placed upon its language. We prefer, however, to give these words their common meaning, and feel ourselves safe in believing our Saviour himself, where he says, John xvii. 3. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, *the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*" H.

Exclamation of Thomas to our Lord.

When Jesus first appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, Thomas was not present, nor would he credit the testimony of his brethren, when they declared, that they had seen their master. Nothing but the evidence of his senses, he said, should convince him. Eight days afterwards, Jesus appeared to them again, and gently rebuked Thomas for his unbelief. "And Thomas answered and said unto him; my Lord, and my God."*

This text is usually quoted by the orthodox, as a proof of the deity of Jesus Christ. Let us see how far the context, and the general sense of scripture, warrant such a use.

What was the fact, which Thomas doubted, before he uttered these words? Was it, that Jesus was the living God? No; such a report had not been made to him. It was the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which he doubted. He had seen him die on the cross, and knew that his body was deposited in the tomb, and when his brethren declared, that they had seen him alive, Thomas was incredulous. When he saw Jesus, his

* John xx. 28.

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incredulity was removed; that is, he believed him to have arisen, and to be still alive; and for this reason only, because he had *seen* him. This is plain from the words of our Saviour immediately following. "Thomas, *because thou hast seen me*, thou hast believed." When Christ exposed the wounds in his side and hands, and told him, on exhibiting these, "not to be faithless, but believing," could this possibly be an evidence to Thomas, that the person with whom he was conversing was the invisible God? He certainly did not believe him to be God just before, when he refused to believe in his resurrection. He now saw him in bodily presence with the wounds inflicted at his death. Who will say, that this was calculated to produce a conviction of his being the supreme, spiritual, eternal God?

At that time, Thomas certainly considered the person before him to be the same with whom he had lived, whom he had seen overcome with trials, grief, and sufferings, and whom he knew to have been scourged, crucified, and buried. Did he believe this person to be the Supreme Being? Did he believe that the Father of the universe had died on a cross? How, then, could he believe that person to be God, who he knew had thus died?

Besides, if Thomas believed in the deity of Christ, how is it to be accounted for, that the other apostles never gave any indications of a similar faith? In all the histories of the evangelists we never find the apostles addressing Christ as the Supreme Being, nor speaking of him in that character. Even after his ascension, Peter, in his sermon to the people, so far from calling him God, designates him as "a man approved of God, by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did by him."*

* Acts ii. 22.

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It is also worthy of remark, that in the same chapter in which the words of Thomas are found, and but a few verses preceding, Christ declares, "I ascend unto my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God." This declaration makes a most striking distinction between himself, and God the Father. Moreover, in the third verse following the words of Thomas, it is expressly said, "These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;" not that Jesus is God, but the *Son* of God.

After considering these things, it is impossible to suppose Thomas intended to address his divine master as the Supreme Being. If we will preserve any consistency in the Scriptures, we must look for another meaning. Whatever may be the exact sense, it is evident, that Thomas expresses surprise. Two modes of explanation have been suggested. The first makes the titles of Lord and God to be actually applied to Christ, but in a limited signification, expressive of dignity and power, as they are often applied to men in different parts of the Scriptures.*

According to the other mode, the words of Thomas were an exclamation, a sudden expression of astonishment at the miracle, which had been wrought in the resurrection of Jesus, and which was on this occasion so unexpectedly and forcibly manifested to the senses and mind of Thomas. Dr. Whitby in his *Last Thoughts*, seems to incline to this explanation. "These words, *my Lord and my God*," he observes, "may have this import,—*my Lord and my God* have done this; and so they exactly agree with the faith of the Apostles, saying, 'The God of our Fathers *raised up* Jesus, whom ye

* For examples see Exod. vii. 1.—xxii. 28.—Deut. x. 17.—Ps. lxxxii. 1.—xcvii. 7.

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slew, and hanged on a tree.' Or thus, *My Lord and my God*, how great is thy power; for, saith St. Paul, Ephesians, i. 19, 20, God exerted the greatness of his power, and the activity of his might, in raising our Lord Jesus from the dead." Lardner, Lindsey, Kenrick, and others have adopted this mode of interpretation.

It has been argued as an objection to this latter explanation, that Thomas spoke directly *to* our Lord, and therefore the titles must be applied to him. This by no means follows. It is only a verbal objection, the weight of which will be removed by comparing this passage with others of similar phraseology in the Scriptures. "And Jonathan said *unto* David, O Lord, God of Israel."* Yet no one ever supposed, that David was the supreme God; nor can such an inference be drawn with any more propriety from the words of Thomas in regard to Christ.

The substance of what has here been said may be expressed in few words as follows. Take the text *alone*, and it *may* admit the conclusion, that Thomas intended to address Christ as God. But all the circumstances of the case, and the whole sense of scripture, forbid such a conclusion. It is obvious, that another explanation *may* be given in perfect consistency with these circumstances, and the sense of scripture. We need not ask which our understanding, and a proper reverence for the Scriptures should incline us to adopt. If we were trinitarians, we do not see how we could with propriety bring this text to our service.†

* 1 Sam. xx. 12.

† There have been different modes of rendering the original of the passage under consideratian into other languages. The Greek is, ὁ κυριος μου, και ὁ θεος μου, but in this language the nominative case is often put for the vocative. Translators, therefore, take

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Rev. Dr. Ware's Ordination Sermon at New York.

In a former number, [Vol. II. p. 249.] we have mentioned the Sermon preached by the Rev. Professor Ware, of Harvard University, at the ordination of his son, the Rev. William Ware, to the pastoral charge of the First Congregational Church in New York. Three editions of this discourse, we understand, have already been published during the short period since it was delivered. This is sufficient testimony of its very high merits. Our chief purpose at present, is not so much to make our readers acquainted with our own opinion of the sermon, as with the sermon itself.

The text was chosen from the language of the Jews at Rome to St. Paul, when he called them together to explain the cause of his having been sent to that city. "But we desire to know of thee what thou thinkest; for, as concerning this sect, we know that it is every where spoken against." From these words, the preacher takes occasion to enter upon some of the general views of the christian doctrines, as they are understood by unitarians, and particularly to show the influence they ought to have on the religious principles and character of those

the liberty of expressing this passage in either case according to their judgment of the sense. Those, who put it in the nominative, suppose συ ει to be understood, and then it will read, *Thou art my Lord and my God.* Le Clerc prefers this rendering. See *A Supplement to Dr Hammond's Paraphrase, &c.* p. 210. Beza and Castalio seem to be of the same opinion, as they both render it *Dominus meus, et Deus meus*, although they do not insert the verb. When the passage is thus rendered, it admits of no consistent explanation, except the one first mentioned above.

Tremellius translates it from the Syriac in the vocative,—*Domine mi, et Deus mi.* This we have no doubt, is the correct rendering. As our English version is ambiguous, it may be taken in either sense.

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by whom they are embraced. The preliminary part of his discourse is taken up with several pertinent remarks on the corruptions, which, at a very early period crept into the christian scheme, and gradually mingled error with truth, till the doctrines originally taught by the Saviour were obscured and almost lost sight of amidst the darkness, which for a long time brooded over the world.

"It was not long," says the author, "that the doctrine taught by the founder of our faith remained in its primitive purity. Soon it became incorporated with the philosophy of the age—it mingled with the interests of the world, and was corrupted and debased by human passions. In a few instances it had assumed a character so different from what it was, as it first proceeded from the lips of Jesus and his apostles, that he who should then have first seen it, would scarcely have been able to recognize it as the same thing, that was presented to his view and demanded his faith in the institutions of the day.

"The corruptions which thus early began to be introduced, were increased, as the religion passed into the deep intellectual and moral darkness of the ages that succeeded. And they were then perpetuated, and the restoration of the primitive faith was prevented, by the policy of withholding from christians the books of the New Testament, and permitting them to know their religion only as it was to be seen in the public institutions, and in the interpretations of the church."

After mentioning the difficulties, which the first reformers were compelled to encounter, and showing that a religious reformation, from the nature of the case, will always be met with a strong opposition, because it is a subject, in which the feelings, the prejudices, and the

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deepest interests of men are concerned, the author continues;

"Besides this, there is another circumstance, which early stopped the progress of the reformation, and has since retarded the restoration of our religion to its primitive state. The followers and successors of those great men, who first gave an impulse to the christian world, have satisfied themselves with indolently adopting the *peculiar opinions* of the reformers, instead of asserting the great *principles* of the reformation. They have only changed one human master for another, instead of renouncing all authority, but that of our common master, the great head of the church. Thus receiving implicitly, and following servilely the theological opinions of Luther and Calvin, (most of which made no part of the reformation; for they were opinions which they brought with them from the church, from which they separated, and held afterwards in common with that church,) the great principles of the reformation, 'the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and the right of private judgment in their interpretation,' were lost sight of.

"The consequence of this has been, that the churches of the reformation, directing their attention to the maintenance and defence of the system of faith, which the reformers adopted, instead of imitating the spirit of free inquiry which distinguished them, and practically asserting the religious liberty, which they first dared to claim, and maintained, have done all that was in their power to prevent the reformation from proceeding a step further, than its first champions had carried it. There has accordingly not ceased to be too reasonable ground for the same complaint, which two centuries ago was drawn from the celebrated Robinson, in his farewell

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to the pilgrims of Leyden—that the followers of Luther and Calvin would proceed no further than their leaders had gone before them; but still stuck where they left them, instead of proceeding forward in imitation of their example.—

"In the present age, so distinguished for the light, which it has shed upon every other branch of human knowledge, the study of religion has not been neglected. The interpretation of the holy scriptures, in particular, has claimed a large share of the attention of christian students; and in no age probably, since the first promulgation of the gospel, have the labours of the learned contributed so much, within a short time, to explain and illustrate the sacred books. New sources of knowledge having been opened in the course of three centuries, and the rules and principles of interpretation being better understood, than in the infancy of modern learning,—it has happened of course, that views of christian doctrine are entertained by many, in some important points, different from the faith that was held by the first reformers, and from the system of doctrines, which has generally prevailed in protestant churches since that time. The most important of these deviations have related to the personal unity of God, the nature and person of Jesus Christ, and several opinions, which have an immediate relation to the character of the moral government of God.

"But these doctrines—by way of distinction, and with great propriety, denominated Unitarian—are not to be regarded as new discoveries. They were not first brought to light, nor first restored to light, by the labour and research of the present age. They have been held by some of the greatest luminaries in the christian world, ever since the period of the reformation; and we

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believe them to have constituted the faith of the primitive christians, until those gross corruptions were incorporated with the gospel, from which it was the work of the reformation, and has been the gradual labour of succeeding times, to purify it.

"That examination of the sacred books, which has led to these results, has not been undertaken with levity, nor conducted with careless indifference; but with a seriousness, piety, love of truth, and conscientious fidelity in search of it, which becomes the christian character; and with an anxious wish to know, what is the true doctrine concerning himself, and the purposes of his mission, which our Saviour taught. It has been conducted, too, with the same reverence for the sacred writings, and scrupulous care to acknowledge nothing for revealed truth, which they did not find there taught, whatever place it might hold in established systems, which marked the character of those, who first burst the chains of ecclesiastical tyranny, opened the eyes of the christian world to their rights and their duties, and assumed and vindicated the liberty, with which the Founder of their faith had made them free.—

"And we therefore rightfully appeal to the public sense of justice, when those, who claim for themselves, and professedly allow to all, the right of free inquiry and the privilege of interpreting the scriptures for themselves, yet, in palpable violation of this principle, deny even the christian name, and, as far as they have power, christian privileges, to those, who in the exercise of this right, and in performing a sacred duty, are led to adopt a system of faith, differing in some points from that, which generally prevails."

The author concludes this part of his discourse, by assuring us, that notwithstanding the reproaches and

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abuse to which they are exposed, who think it their duty to follow their own convictions, and yield obedience to their conscience in their religious faith and principles, yet they are not without many consolations, and many encouragements to firmness and perseverance.

"For we find," he observes, "that many, who have been most honoured as the asserters of christian truth and christian liberty, were yet once considered as having renounced the faith, and as deserving to be classed with infidels, and apostates, and the enemies of God. It was so with the primitive disciples of our Lord. It was so with the whole company of martyrs, who succeeded them, not only in bearing witness to the truth, through evil report as well as good report, but in sealing their testimony with their blood. It was so with the no less faithful and intrepid band of reformers, who first dared to attempt the delivering of our faith from the corruptions it had contracted in ages of darkness and ecclesiastical despotism. They will not then be surprised, 'as if some strange thing had befallen them;' nor discouraged under the apprehension of being borne down, and seeing the failure of what they believe to be the cause of truth; nor will they yield to timid doubts and misgiving of mind, under an impression, that to meet with opposition is any mark of error. They will have satisfaction in reflecting, that in suffering opprobrium, they are associated with all those, who in every age have had occasion to stand forth in the cause of christian truth and liberty; and that if reproach or opposition be a mark of error, then are those of former ages, whom we are accustomed to hold in highest veneration, to be regarded as false teachers, and apostates from the true faith."

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The second branch of the discourse consists in pointing out some of the duties, which, under existing circumstances, it behooves unitarians to practise. One of their first duties, he thinks, should be, to enlighten the ignorance of their brethren, and do away misrepresentation. We are under no obligation to do this; for if our fellow-christians choose to let their zeal go before their knowledge, and their passions get the better of their understanding, it is no fault of ours. It is their duty to inquire, before they give anxiety to themselves, or molestation to us. But as they seem extremely forgetful of this duty, motives of charity, if nothing more, should prompt us to every exertion in making known our opinions. This is not to be done at once. "It is 'line upon line, and precept upon precept,' only, the frequent reiteration with distinctness and impression, which is to produce the final triumph of truth, and give the public sentiment and feeling a right direction. As often as there is a misapprehension of our meaning, or a false or defective statement of it is repeated; the true and faithful representation, which is to correct the mistake, and confute the false charge, must be repeated also. Nor will the faithful advocate and defender of truth, allow himself to grow weary of the task, nor suffer 'the thrice confuted error,' at length to pass uncontradicted." These truths we consider highly important, and we are persuaded they are thought so by unitarians generally. The prevailing and increasing spirit of activity among them, in diffusing religious knowledge, is one of the most encouraging omens of the ultimate success of their cause. It is equally a test of their sincerity and disinterestedness, their charity, zeal, and love of truth. Let this spirit continue, and we cannot but anticipate the happiest consequences.

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In the discharge of this duty we hope every one will give heed with readiness to the excellent counsel of Dr. Ware. He would have us gentle and courteous, mild and amiable, forgiving and forbearing, even when we suffer wrongfully, and are thought worthy of the obloquy of the narrow minded, and the anathemas of the illnatured and bigotted. "If our christian faith, or our christian character be assailed with bitterness, and even the christian name be denied us, we must endeavour to manifest, that we deserve not the harsh and rude assault, that we merit not to be thus unceremoniously thrust out of the pale of charity, excluded from the kingdom of heaven, and classed with heathen and infidels; by refraining from the imitation of the spirit which is thus excited against us, and by looking to him, whose example it is our duty and our highest glory in all things to follow, 'who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him, who judgeth righteously.'" Let it be the prayer of us all to be guided by this spirit.

Another duty, which the author urges with much earnestness, and at considerable length, is, that the influence of our faith should be seen in our lives and practice. "We must not," he tells us, "in our zeal to defend and support the articles of our belief, forget that the great end of religion is *personal holiness.* That form of faith, and that system of doctrine, is the best, which tends the most effectually to produce the fruits of a holy life." Faith is nothing, unless it descends into the heart, controls the will, subdues the passions, regulates the temper and the affections, accords with conscience, and establishes the habitual exercise of piety in the soul. Let our faith have this practical tendency, and we shall by degrees silence the evil reports of our

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enemies, who charge us with embracing a system, which has no power on the life and the heart.

"We must refute also, in a similar manner by our practice, another allegation, which has sometimes been brought against the doctrines which we cherish and profess;—that having its foundation not in scripture, but in human reason, it inspires us with but little reverence for the Scriptures; and that in supporting and defending it, we set aside or pervert the Scriptures, and set up human reason in opposition to their authority. If this charge be founded in truth, it will indeed justify the alarm, which has been industriously sounded abroad; and the apprehension of the serious christian, that the foundation of his faith is undermined, and that mere natural religion is to take the place of Divine Revelation, will not be without just cause.

"But how little foundation there is for such a charge, may be seen by him, who is willing to see, in the use which we make of the Scriptures, and in the manner in which we appeal to them, as being in their literal and obvious meaning, the sole foundation of those opinions by which we are distinguished. It may be seen also, in the active part we take in their distribution, in the labours and researches by which unitarians, it may be confidently said, not less than any other denomination of christians, have, within the last half century, contributed to promote the understanding of the Scriptures, and to ascertain their genuineness and authority, and to restore them, where they have been corrupted, to their primitive state; and to recommend them to the love and reverence of mankind, by displaying their excellency and perfection, and showing their consistency with unperverted reason.

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"If individual writers, of high character and standing, have occasionally used expressions, which have been understood to derogate from the authority of the Scriptures, and to exalt human reason above the revealed law of God, they are sentiments which are far from being received by unitarians generally. I know of no sentiment in which unitarians are more entirely agreed, than in the absolute authority of Divine Revelation. It is this very sentiment, and their reverence for the Scriptures in which it is contained, that has enkindled their zeal, and called forth their labours, and led them to push their inquiries into their authenticity, that they may free them from corruption,—that they may understand their meaning,—that they may know what are the doctrines which they reveal,—and that they may not mistake for truths of revelation, what are nothing more than human inventions."

The author has some very appropriate remarks on the charges, which are so disingenuously and repeatedly thrown out against us, that we degrade the character of the Saviour, and rank him no higher than the heathen sages and moralists, or than Moses and the prophets. He concludes as follows;

"No charge can be more groundless, than that those, who deny the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ, rank him only with the heathen sages and moralists, with Confucius and Zoroaster, with Numa and Socrates. To *them* we attribute only human wisdom and human authority; but to *him*, a divine commission, a wisdom and authority from heaven; for, as he proved his divine mission by works, which no man could perform except God were with him, so we give full credit to his word, when he said,—'The doctrine which I teach is not mine, but his who sent me.' The difference, then, that we place

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between *him* and *them*, is the difference between divine and human authority, between finite and infinite wisdom. Nor is this all. We regard him not merely as a true prophet and messenger of God, and thus on a level with those, who had before been employed to reveal the will and execute the purposes of heaven,—such as Moses and the ancient prophets. We regard him as far exalted above them, in the dignity of his character, in the purposes of his mission, in the fulness and extent of the divine power communicated to him, and in the benefits, which he came to confer upon men. Do we degrade him, because we deny him that independent power and authority, which he disclaimed himself? Do we dishonour him, when we refuse him an equality with that Being, whom he acknowledged as his God,—by whom, he was *sent* into the world as a messenger of love and peace, and to whom he prayed as his Father and God? Are we justly liable to the imputation of lowering the merits of the Saviour, and diminishing the value of his services, of denying the Lord that bought us, and leaving no place for gratitude and a sense of obligation for our redemption by his blood,—while we believe and preach, that he was, what a voice from heaven declared him to be, and all that he himself ever claimed to be,—the beloved Son of God,—whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world;—sent into the world, on the most merciful and important errand;—that of delivering mankind from the bondage of corruption, and the guilt and condemnation of sin;—that of restoring them to the favour of God, by recovering the divine image in them;—that of redeeming them from sin, the wages of which is death;—that of reconciling them to God by reconciling them to his law, and, by his instructions, example, and

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especially the revelation of a future state, bringing them to repentance, obedience, and a holy life."

We have thus given a brief outline of Professor Ware's discourse. We hope this will be enough to induce such of our readers, as have not seen the discourse itself, to read the whole. It discusses topics, which are worthy of the deliberate consideration, not only of unitarians, but of their opponents, and of all christians.

Spirit of Orthodoxy.

The materials for supplying this department of our work accumulate so fast, that we hardly know how to select, without going beyond the limits to which we feel bound to confine ourselves. And although we could not hope by our feeble aid to circulate any thing, which can more effectually promote the objects and principles of unitarianism, than many of the ebulitions, which, in the paroxisms of an uninformed and inconsiderate zeal, have escaped from our orthodox brethren, yet we confess it is with pain, that we are obliged to expose so much of the weakness of human nature, and of the desolating ravages of untamed passions, connected with apparent sincerity, and solemn religious professions. This is demanded, however, by justice to ourselves, and to the faith we embrace.

When violent and offensive charges are preferred against us, it is our duty to make known the spirit by which they are dictated. Their truth and validity will chiefly depend on this. If, for instance, our accusers are found to be guilty of the same crime, with which they would darken our characters, it is more than probable,

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that some heating causes, which are out of sight, work them up to an unnatural temperature, and that their language betrays more than it expresses. If they violate the decorum of civilized life, and lose all the characteristics of the religion of Jesus in their attempts to fix upon us the stigma of infidelity and irreligion, it is at least a chance, that while groping in the dismal mists of passion and prejudice, they have mistaken the hideous spectres of their own imagination, for things that have a being and a substance. In short, when they so far divest themselves of the christian character, as to make slanderous accusations against their brethren, throw out vehement assertions, and deal in vituperation and abuse, it is pretty evident that something is wrong. Such conduct argues radically defective principles; and, consequently, any system of faith founded on these principles must be equally defective. In our view, no stronger argument needs be sought against the old fashioned calvinistic orthodoxy, than the spirit it infuses into its advocates.

The following extracts are from a work lately published by the Rev. Dr. Miller, called "Letters on Unitarianism."

"In every direction, and with a profusion of the most lavish kind, they [unitarians] are daily scattering abroad their instruments of seduction. Probably in no part of our country out of *Massachusetts*, do these poisoned agents so completely fill the air, or, like one of the plagues of *Egypt*, so noisomely 'come up into your houses, your chambers, and your kneading troughs,' as in *Baltimore*. In fact, the unitarians in that neighbourhood seem to be emulating the zeal of some of their brethren in *England*, who have been known to go into an orthodox church; to withdraw during the prayer, that they might not join in 'idolatrous devotions;' and on their return, to strew on a *communion table*, which happened to be spread on that day, a parcel of socinian tracts, and pamphlets. I have heard of nothing quite equal to this in the *United States;* but, from present appearances, am by

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no means confident that something of the same kind will not soon be exhibited."

"It is plain, also, that unitarians reject every one of what we deem the peculiar and essential doctrines of the gospel. According to this scheme, there is no other than a mere human, fallible, and peccable Saviour; no real *redemption by the blood of Christ;* no justification by his merits; no Holy Spirit to sanctify our depraved nature; no prevailing intercessor; nothing that can with propriety be called grace; all—all is figurative, cold, inadequate and unsatisfying."

"They have appeared willing to tolerate every thing excepting the truth. But when Christ was to be opposed, or his truth sacrificed, *Herod* and *Pilate*, by whatever names they were called, have been ever ready to *make friends together*. On this fact I make no further comment. You will judge for yourselves whether it is characteristic of *the spirit of truth*, or of *the spirit of error*."

"You are prepared, I hope, to decide promptly and without wavering, that they are by no means to be considered as christians, in any scriptural sense of the word; that their preaching is to be avoided as blasphemy; their publications to be abhorred as pestiferous; their ordinances to be held unworthy of regard as christian institutions; and their persons to be in all respects treated as decent and sober deists in disguise. Such is the estimate which I feel constrained to form for myself; and, of course, that which I wish to impress upon your minds. And, if I do not deceive myself, you have seen enough to preclude all doubt as to its justice. If they reject every fundamental doctrine of the religion of Christ, they, of course, reject christianity; if they reject christianity, they, surely, are not christians; if they are not christians, their congregations, evidently, ought not to be called churches, nor their ordinances considered as valid; and, these things being so, you ought to regard a proposition to go and hear them preach, or to read their publications, as you would a proposition to hear a preacher of open infidelity, or to read an artful publication of a follower of *Herbert* or of *Hume*."

"If it was the duty of the reformers and their adherents, to come out from *Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations;* and if it be allowed, on all hands, to be incumbent on christians to refuse all fellowship, in matters of religion, with the tribes of open infidelity; to me it appears equally plain, that christians ought no longer to acknowledge as such, or to think of meeting on any common religious ground, those who deny the christian's God, and preach entirely another gospel."

"Those persons must have been very careless observers of what was passing before them, who have not perceived, that infidels, scepticks,

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the profane and licentious, those who wish to continue in sin, and yet to have no fear of hell, and in general the enemies of a strict and spiritual religion, are, in many places, flocking to the unitarian standard. And as these form a numerous body, in every part of the world, there can be little doubt that considerable numbers of them will adorn the triumph of unitarians for a few years to come. But it will be a triumph as short as it is ignoble. It is just as incredible that *such* materials should form a respectable and permanent religious body, on which the divine blessing may be expected to rest, as that the image in *Nebuchadnezzar's* dream, made up of *brass*, (the fine *gold* and even the *silver* are entirely wanting here) and *iron*, and *clay*, should have lasted forever. Their cause, like that image, will soon crumble to pieces, before the breath of Jehovah our righteousness, whom they blaspheme. The truth as it is in Jesus, and the church founded upon it, have survived the impious efforts of *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, of *Noetus* and *Artemon*, of *Arius* and *Socinus*, and of a host like them; and it will survive, and grow, and triumph gloriously, when the similar efforts of their successors of the present day shall have gone the way of all such unhallowed and spurious things."

Now, whatever the author of these passages, or the friends of orthodoxy generally, may think, we are persuaded they will produce a reaction by no means favourable to the purpose for which they were intended. No sensible and reflecting mind will listen with complacency to representations so obviously distorted and unlicensed, and which carry on their face such marks of improbability and absurdity. We rejoice at the result to which they must lead, but we can truly say, that we lament for the injury they inflict on our common faith, by coming out under the garb of christianity.

Unitarian Society in Northumberland.

The Rev. Mr. Kay, a unitarian Clergyman from England, has lately been preaching we understand with considerable success in Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

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Much opposition was as usual manifested at first by the orthodox, and the customary means of exciting the popular voice, and predisposing the public mind against unitarians, were resorted to. But instead of suppressing, they rather tended to awaken inquiry, and the subject has attracted more attention, than even its most sanguine friends could have anticipated.

Among other testimonies of the interest, which the people of that place and vicinity take in the cause, has been the establishment of a Unitarian Book Society, called, "The Northumberland Tract Society, for promoting Christian Knowledge and the Practice of Virtue, by the Distribution of Books and Tracts, founded on the great Principle of the Unity of God, and the subordinate, though divine Commission and Authority of the Lord Jesus." We have seen the Articles of the Society, and think them exceedingly well calculated to promote the desired object of union and concert among its members, and the diffusion of religious knowledge.

We are glad to see, that associations of this sort are becoming frequent. They afford an opportunity of great good, with little expense. Many will read, who will not listen to a sermon. Neither the motives of curiosity nor of piety will take men far out of their way in quest of knowledge, especially when they are told that danger lurks in the path, ready to decoy and devour them. As we value religious truth and freedom, as we hope to advance the glory of our Maker and the Redeemer's kingdom, as we desire to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and to a solemn and practical regard for the holy precepts of his religion, let us not be weary in our efforts, nor sparing

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in our labours. We hope the example of Mr. Kay and his friends will be followed in other places. Even where the numbers are small and means limited, much good may be done by united action.

To Subscribers and Patrons.

With this number we close the second volume of the Miscellany. Our success thus far has been such as to afford us the highest gratification and encouragement. We venture to say, indeed, without arrogating anything to ourselves, that it has been unexampled in this country. In the space of fifteen months our work has gone into a circulation, extending to the remotest corners of the union, and our subscription list has been daily increasing from the time it commenced. For this success we assume little merit to ourselves. We believe it is to be attributed to the rational and consistent views of religion, which, according to our ability, we have attempted to exhibit. It has been our great aim to keep within the bounds of the understanding and common sense of every reader, believing that the religion of Christ was meant to be a rational system, and one which the humblest capacity may comprehend in all its peculiar and essential points. We may sometimes fail, but we always strive to speak in plain language, and to address ourselves to the reason and good sense of men.

We have been induced to engage in more controversy, than we could desire; but we have thought it our duty not to be silent, where silence would argue disrespect for ourselves, and indifference to the principles of our faith. We have been sometimes, perhaps, betrayed into an earnestness not entirely accordant with the tranquil

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feelings of those, who are unacquainted with the circumstances under which we are placed, and with the motives by which we are guided. All we can say is, that we have endeavoured to exercise moderation and discretion. Our adversaries rise up so thickly and fiercely around us, and conduct their assaults in such a variety of ways, that it would by no means be surprising, if our judgment should not always dictate the best mode of defence. We trust, however, that we have committed no very heinous offence, nor essential mistake. If we have, we can hardly hope to improve, for we shall continue to resist encroachments, assert and maintain our rights as christians, expose ignorance and misrepresentation, rebuke the rudeness of meddlesome bigotry, and go on, indeed, very much as we have done. We shall not be easily turned aside from any course, which we think will advance the cause of truth, and redound to the glory of God.

It is hardly necessary, we presume, to remind our agents and subscribers, that the amount of the subscription for the present year will become due on the first of May. As our work was not intended to be a source of profit, it is important that our receipts should be punctually rendered; and thoughtfulness in this respect, on the part of our subscribers, is the more requisite, as many of them live at such a distance, and so much scattered, that much delay must necessarily attend any returns through the common channels of communication.

We have uniformly sent out a larger number of pages, than was promised in the prospectus; and in the quality of its materials, and the neatness of its execution, we believe the Miscellany may be compared to advantage with any similar publication in the country. The next volume will be commenced on a paper of a

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superiour quality to that, which we have been using, and with a new type procured expressly for the purpose. The present price is much lower than the comparative subscription prices of other periodical works; and the increasing labour and expense attending the management of the Miscellany, will probably render it necessary, should we continue the work another year, to raise the annual subscription to two dollars.

As the second edition of the first volume is completed, full sets may now be obtained from Baltimore, or from the agents generally.

The Rev. George G. Ingersoll, of Harvard University, has received a unanimous invitation from the First Congregational Society in Burlington, Vermont, to become their pastor, and has accepted it.

The Rev. Samuel J. May has lately been ordained in Boston, for the purpose of taking charge of the Unitarian Society in Brooklyn, Connecticut. The ordaining services were performed by the Rev. Mr. Frothingham, Rev. Dr. Freeman, Rev. Dr. Porter, Rev. President Kirkland, Rev. Henry Ware, Rev. Mr. Pierpont.

A second edition of Sewall's *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* is in press in New York, and will shortly be published. This is to be a stereotype edition, on paper of a good quality, and will be afforded at a low price.

Errata. For *Plymouth*, p. 257, read *Saybrook*. Page 273, at bottom, for *Marsden*, read *Mardon*. Page 292, line 14 from the top, instead of *or*, read *for*.

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